THE HOLY CITY

JERUSALEM · II

by

SELMA LAGERLÖF

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THE HOLY CITY

JERUSALEM II

FROM THE SWEDISH OF
SELMA LAGERLÖF

TRANSLATED BY
VELMA SWANSTON HOWARD

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THE HOLY ROCK AND THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

THE HOLY CITY

THE HOLY ROCK AND THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

IT WAS a hot August in Palestine. Every day the sun beat down upon the heads of the people. There was not a cloud on the sky and no rain had fallen since April. Though not any hotter than it is wont to be at this season, it was almost unbearable. How one would ever be able to endure such heat one hardly knew, or where one could go to escape it.

Jaffa was perhaps the best refuge—not in the city itself, with its buildings crowded closely together on a steep hill, and where a sickening stench arose from the filthy streets and the large soap factories; but the town lay close by the sea, which always brought some freshening breeze. And one could be fairly comfortable in the environs, as Jaffa was surrounded by hundreds of orange groves, where the fruit hung fresh and cool, protected from the blasting sunlight by its stiff and glossy dark-green foliage.

But how insufferably hot it was even in Jaffa! The big leaves of the tall, resinous shrubs were dry and shriveled and the hardy pelargoniums, no longer able to flower, lay drooping on mounds and in hollows—almost buried beneath billows of dust. Seeing the red blossoms of the cactus hedges, one would imagine it was all the heat

which their thick stems had absorbed through the summer that had suddenly broken out in great flames. One realized how hot it must be, when seeing the children running along the beach, to get down to the sea, lift their feet high, as though they were stepping upon burning coals.

If one could not stand it in Jaffa, then where was one to go? Anyhow, it was better here than on the wide plain of Sharon, which lay beyond the town, between the sea and the mountains. To be sure, there were people still staying in the small towns and villages that dotted the plain, though it was difficult to understand how they could survive the heat and drouth. But they rarely ventured outside their windowless dwellings and never left the towns, where the houses and a few solitary trees yielded them some little protection against the sun. On the open plain one could no more have found a green blade of grass than a human being. All the beautiful red anemones and poppies of the spring, all the little pinks and daisies that had covered the ground as with a thick red-and-white carpet, were gone; and the crops of wheat, rye and durra grown in the fields near the towns, had already been harvested, and the harvesters, with their oxen and asses, their songs and dances, had returned to their village homes. All that remained of the glories of spring were the tall withered stalks that rose above the sun-baked soil—and that had once borne beautiful, fragrant lilies.

A good many persons maintained that one could best stand the summers in Jerusalem. The town was cer-

tainly cramped and over-populated, but as it lay at the highest point of the long range of mountains extending across the whole of Palestine, no breath of wind could come from any direction without its freshness reaching the Holy City. But, notwithstanding these blessed winds and the light mountain air, there was more than enough of summer heat even in Jerusalem. People slept at night on the roofs of their houses, and remained indoors during the day. They had to drink ill-smelling water, which had gathered in the subterranean cisterns during the winter rains; and they were anxious lest that even that might give out. The least puff of wind raised thick clouds of lime-dust, and when one walked along the white roads outside the city one's feet sank deep into the soft fine soil. But worst of all, the heat prevented people from sleeping. For lack of sleep the inhabitants of Jerusalem were by day depressed and irritable, and at night had terrifying visions and were tormented by haunting fears.

On one of these hot nights an American woman, who had been living in Jerusalem for some years, lay tossing on her bed, unable to rest. She moved her bed from the room onto the balcony outside her window and applied a cold compress to her aching head; but nothing afforded her any relief. She lived about five minutes' walk from the Damascus gate, in a palatial house that stood quite by itself in a lonely spot. Hence one would have thought that out there the air would be fresh and pure, but that night it seemed as if all the sultriness of the city

had centred about the house. There was a little wind, but it came from the desert, and was hot and stinging, as if filled with invisible sand-grains. To add to the discomforts of the night, a lot of street dogs roving outside the city walls rent the air with their loud yelps.

The American woman, having lain awake for hours, became prey to despondency. In her effort to conquer her depression she reminded herself that, since coming to Jerusalem, led by a divine revelation, she had been singularly blessed; she had founded a colony, and had overcome persecutions and hardships untold; but now she could find no comfort even in these thoughts.

She lay imagining that her faithful followers would be murdered, that her enemies would set fire to the house, that Jerusalem was sending all its fanatics against her, and she would be crushed by the blind hatred and bigotry nurtured within its walls.

She tried to regain her usual serene confidence. Why should she despair now, she asked herself, just when her cause was progressing so well, when the Gordon Colony had been strengthened by the addition of some fifty sturdy, capable Swedes, who had come over from America, and when still more of these good, dependable people were coming from Sweden. In reality her mission had never appeared so promising as at that time.

At last, to escape from her morbid fears, she got up, threw around her a long voluminous cloak, and went out in the direction of Jerusalem. Turning from the road, she climbed a steep little hill, from the top of which could

be seen, in the moonlight, the turreted walls and the numberless large and small cupolas of the city outlined against the nocturnal sky.

Though still fighting her fears and apprehensions, she could not but notice the solemn beauties of the night. The pale-green moonlight of Palestine shed its weird lustre over the landscape, and gave to everything an air of awesome mystery. Suddenly the thought came to her: Just as in the old castles of Europe there are haunted rooms, where ghosts are said to abide, so this ancient city, and the desolate hills surrounding it, might perchance be the Old World's haunted chamber, a place where one would expect to see vanished grandeur descending from the mountains and the ghosts of bygone ages roaming about in the darkness of night.

The woman felt no terror at these thoughts; on the contrary, they filled her with joyous expectation. Since the night of the wreck of the steamship *L'Univers*, when she had heard the voice of God speak to her, she had now and then received a message from another world. She felt that something of the kind would come to her now. Her brain seemed to expand, her senses became singularly acute; she perceived that the night was not silent, but full of strange sounds.

Before she realized what had come over her, she heard a powerful voice, that seemed to proceed from a very old and austere being, utter these words:

"Verily, I can with pride hold my head above the dust; none is like unto me in might and holiness."

This was no sooner said than a sharp bell-clang issued from the Dome of the Holy Sepulchre. It sounded like a curt contradiction.

The first voice continued: "Was it not I that caused the city to spring up in the wilderness, that filled the earth with the fear of God, that stemmed the tide of the world and forced it into a new channel?"

The voice seemed to come from the east, from that part of the town where Solomon's Temple once stood, and where Omar's Mosque was now sharply outlined against the grayish-green horizon.

"Harken to me!" the voice from the old Temple site went on. "My recollections of this place go back to the age long before there was any city on this mountain. I remember it as a wild and inaccessible ridge. In the beginning it was only a mass of rock; but all the rains which from the creation of the world had fallen upon it split it up into numberless hills, some of which had gently-rising slopes; others had broad summits and perpendicular walls; others, again, were so narrow they could only serve as bridges between the different heights."

Here followed a succession of loud peals from the direction where rose the Dome of the Holy Sepulchre.

The woman, whose ear had now become attuned to the sounds reverberating through the night, noted that here was also a voice uttering audible words. She seemed to hear a short "this I too have seen."

The first voice spoke again. "At the highest point

of this ridge was a mountain called Moriah, whose aspect was sombre and forbidding."

The woman sat down on a little heap of ruins, rested her head against her hand, and listened.

As soon as the first voice grew silent, as if from exhaustion, the second voice responded: "I also remember how the mountain looked in the beginning."

"One day," resumed the voice from the Temple site, "it happened that some shepherds, who wandered about the hills with their flocks, discovered this mountain, which was well guarded by hills and vales, as if it held great treasures and wonderful secrets. They climbed to its broad summit, and found there a thing most holy."

"They found nothing but a block of stone," said the voice of the bell-like clang. "It was a large round somewhat flat stone, raised a little above the ground and supported by a smaller stone, and it resembled the head of a giant mushroom."

"But the shepherds," said the first voice, "who knew all the sacred legends from the beginning of Time, were filled with joy at beholding it. 'This is the great Suspended Rock about which we have heard so much,' said they. 'This stone was the first thing God formed when He created the world. From here He spread forth the surface of the earth, east, west, north and south; from here He built up the mountains and rolled out the seas, clear to the borders of the firmament.' "

The voice speaking paused a moment, as if expecting a contradiction; but the voice of the bell was mute.

"How extraordinary!" thought the woman. "Surely it cannot be human beings talking?" Yet in reality it did not seem so very extraordinary; the sultry air and the pale-green moonlight made the strangest phenomena appear most natural.

"The shepherds," continued the first voice, "hastened down from the mountain to make known in all the land that they had found the corner-stone of the world. Soon afterwards, great numbers of people came up to Mount Moriah to offer sacrifice unto God on me, the Suspended Rock, and to praise Him for His glorious work of Creation."

The voice now rose to something that was like a song. In the high, shrill tones dervishes are wont to use when reciting from the Koran, it chanted: "Then for the first time I received sacrificial offerings and adoration. Reports of my existence spread far and wide. Every day long caravans could be seen winding across the grayish-white hills toward Mount Moriah. Verily, I can with pride hold my head high. It was on my account so many people came to Moriah, that merchants found it to their profit to bring hither their wares. Because of me the hillside was settled by those who made their living by providing such as would offer sacrifice with fuel and water, with frankincense and fire, with doves and lambs."

The woman raised her head in astonishment. "It must be the Holy Rock itself speaking," she thought. "Yes, it is surely the great stone that rests beneath

the superb mosaic arches in Omar's Mosque whose voice I hear."

Now it was heard to proclaim: "I am the one and only Holy Rock. I am that which men must forever adore."

This was no sooner said than answered in strong tones from the Dome of the Holy Sepulchre. "You forget that somewhere near the middle of this mountain plain, where you yourself once rested, there was a modest little hillock covered with a growth of wild olives. No doubt you would rather not remember that the old patriarch Shem, the son of the second father of mankind, Noah, once came up to Mount Moriah; he was then advanced in years and his life was drawing to a close. He was attended by two servants, who had brought with them implements needed to hollow out a grave in the rock."

The first voice made no response.

"You pretend not to know that Shem's father, Noah, once owned and treasured the skull of Adam, as a precious relic of the father of race. When Noah was dying, he bequeathed the skull to Shem, rather than to his other sons, because he foresaw that from Shem would spring the greatest of all peoples. And then, when Shem felt that his own hour had struck, he determined to bury the sacred relic on Mount Moriah. But being endowed with the gift of prophecy, he did not put the skull under the Holy Rock, but buried it on the modest little hillock covered with olive trees, which from that day was known as Golgotha, or a place of a skull."

"I remember this incident quite well," replied the first voice, "and I also remember that those who worshipped the rock thought the patriarch too old and infirm to know what he was about."

A single shrill tone came from the Church. To the woman it sounded like a scornful laugh.

"But so trifling a matter is of no importance," rang out from the Dome of the Mosque. "The power and sanctity of the great rock only increased the more. Princes and their people came from distant lands to offer up burnt sacrifice for prosperity and happiness. I can remember a day when a patriarch greater than Shem visited the Mount. I have seen Abraham, white-bearded and venerable, and his son Isaac pass this way. And Abraham did not seek thee, O Golgotha, but it was upon the Suspended Rock he built his altar and bound the lad."

"This, to be sure, must always be reckoned as an honour to you, but remember that a part of this honour is mine," spoke the second voice. "When the angel stayed the hand of Abraham, and he looked about for a sacrifice, it was on Golgotha he found the ram caught by its horns in a thicket of olive shrubs."

The woman listened with strained attention. The more she heard of the contentious claims of the two temples, the less hopefully did she regard her own mission. "O God!" she sighed. "Why didst Thou command me to spread the Gospel of Unity, when strife and dissension have been the only lasting things from the creation of the world?"

The first voice was heard to say: "I forget nothing worth remembering. Even in Abraham's time the mountain plain was far from being a wilderness. There was a city here ruled by a king who was the High Priest of the servants of the Holy Rock. This king was Melchisedek—he who appointed regular seasons for offerings and instituted the beautiful religious ceremonies solemnized at the Holy Rock."

The other voice promptly answered: "I also acknowledge Melchisedek as a holy man and a prophet. That he was chosen of God who can doubt, since he wished to be buried in a cave on Golgotha, on the selfsame spot where rests the skull of Adam. Have you never thought of the prophetic significance of this, that the first sinner and the first saint were buried in the one grave?"

"I understand that you make much of this," said the first voice, "but I can tell you of something that is of far greater moment: The city on the mountain grew, the hills and vales hereabout became peopled, and were given names. In time only the eastern side of the mountain, where the Holy Rock lay, was known as Moriah; the southern slope was called Zion, the western Gareb, and the northern Bezetha."

"Still it was nothing but a small town that lay on the mountain," the first voice declared. "Only shepherds and priests lived there. People had no desire to settle in that barren rock-desert."

This was answered in tones so loud and jubilant they quite startled the woman.

"I have seen King David, in shining armour and coat of crimson, standing here looking out over the city, before it was made the seat of his government. Why did he not choose instead the rich and smiling city of Bethlehem? Why not Jericho of the fertile valley? Why did he not make Gilgal or Hebron the chief city of Israel? Let me remind you that he chose this place because of the Suspended Rock; he chose it because the kings of Israel must needs dwell on the mountain which from time immemorial has basked in the shadow of my sanctity."

Then, for the second time, the voice chanted in sustained tones a song of praise. "I see the great city with its towers and walls; the King's palace with its thousand halls; the crowded streets, the workshops, and the market-stalls. I see the beauty and splendour of the City of David. As I look back upon it all, I may well say: 'Great is thy power, O Rock! All this didst thou call forth. None is like unto thee in sanctity and holiness. As for thee, O Golgotha, thou wast but a spot on the earth, a barren hill-top, outside the city wall. Who ever heard of thee? Who rendered thee homage, or worshipped thee?"

As this chant of praise rang out in the night, the voice of the bell could be heard muttering in muffled tones, as if subdued by a feeling of veneration: "It is plain that you have grown old, for you magnify all that happened in your youth, as the aged are wont to do. The City of David did not extend beyond Zion; it did not even reach to where I stand, at the centre of the mountain.

Therefore it was only natural that I should continue to rest outside the city wall."

The singing voice, seemingly unmindful of the interruption, went on chanting its own praises. "Yet thou didst attain to thy greatest honour, O Rock, in the time of Solomon. Then round about thee the mountain was levelled and covered with flat stones, on which were erected colonnades, as in the courts of kings. Over thee, O Rock, the Temple was raised, and upon thee, who art the head corner-stone of the world, rested the Ark of the Covenant, with the two tables of stone in the Holy of Holies."

To which there came no word of dissent from the Church, only a dull sound like a groan.

"And in the reign of Solomon water was led from the depths of the valleys to the heights round about Jerusalem; for Solomon was the wisest of kings. Trees sprang up from the dry grayish-white earth and roses grew among the rocks. At autumn they gathered figs and grapes, pomegranates and olives in the beautiful pleasure gardens that covered the mountain—to the delight of Solomon. But you, Golgotha, remained a barren hill without the city wall. You were so poor and unfruitful that no rich man of Solomon's day would include you among his pleasure gardens, and no poor man would plant on you even a vine."

At this fresh attack, the adversary took courage and spoke up. "You seem to forget that at that time something happened which foreshadowed Golgotha's coming

glory. For it was then the Queen of Sheba paid a visit to King Solomon, who received her at his palace, called the House of the Forest of Lebanon, because it was built of timber brought from distant Lebanon. When Solomon showed the Arabian Queen this magnificent structure, whose like she had never beheld, she chanced to notice a post in the wall of uncommon thickness. This post was made from three tree-trunks grown together. The heart of the Queen was filled with trepidation on finding that this tree had been brought to the King's palace, and she hastened to tell him its story. 'After our First Parents had been driven out from the beautiful Garden of Eden,' she said, 'the angel that guarded it once allowed Adam's son Seth to enter therein, that he might see the Tree of Life. When Seth left the garden the angel gave him as a parting gift three seeds from the wonderful tree. These seeds Seth planted on Adam's grave, at Mount Lebanon, and from them sprang three stems forming a single tree. It was this tree, O Solomon, the woodmen of King Hiram felled for thee, and which now forms part of thy palace. It has been prophesied that upon this tree a man shall die, that when this comes to pass, Jerusalem will fall and all the tribes of Israel will be scattered.' The Queen of Sheba then prayed the King to destroy the tree, in order to prevent the fulfillment of so dire a prophecy. The King at once had it removed from the wall of his palace, and cast into the Pool of Bethesda."

There was profound silence for a space. The woman

thought she would hear no more. Then, in a moment, the voice of the bell spoke again:

"My thoughts turn backward to a time of great tribulation. I remember when the Temple was destroyed and when the people were carried away to captivity. Where was thy vaunted glory then, O Rock?"

Instantly came the response from the Rock: "Am I not everlasting? Though I have fallen I have always risen again. Hast forgotten about the splendour that surrounded me in the days of Herod? Dost remember the three courts of the Temple, the fires on the altar of burnt sacrifice that at night flamed so high they lighted up the whole city and the portico called Beautiful, with its hundred pillars of porphyry? Dost remember how the sweet odour of the frankincense rising from the Temple was wafted on a western wind all the way to Jericho? Dost remember the Babylonian curtain, interwoven with roses of pure gold, that hung before the Holy of Holies?"

"Verily, I remember all that," answered the voice from the Church in sharp tones. "For it was at that time Herod caused Bethesda to be drained, and his workmen found at the bottom of the pool the Tree of Life, and cast it up onto the edge."

"Dost remember the splendour of the city," cried the voice of the Rock, with exultant pride, "when the princes and people of Judah dwelt on Zion, and when Romans and strangers dwelt in the district of Bezetha? Dost remember the Castle of Mariamne and Castle Antonia? Dost remember the great walls and battlements?"

"I do," said the other voice. "And I remember also it was at that time the good counsellor Joseph of Arimathea had a sepulchre hewn in a rock in his garden, which was close to Golgotha."

The voice of the Rock now trembled a little, but spoke without hesitation. "People from everywhere came to Jerusalem for the great feasts. All the roads of Palestine swarmed with travellers and the hillsides outside the Holy City were covered with tents. Men from Rome, from Athens, from Alexandria, from Damascus, drew hither to view the beauties of the city and its Temple. Dost remember that proud Jerusalem?"

The voice of the bell responded with unbending gravity: "I remember it all. It was then the soldiers of Pilate found at the edge of the Pool of Bethesda the Tree of Life, upon which a Man was doomed to die."

"Despised and rejected you have ever been," rang forth scornfully from the Mosque, "though up to that time you were but an insignificant spot on the earth. The Roman soldiers brought you into shameful prominence by using you as a place of execution. I remember the day they raised three crosses on you."

"Accursed be I should I ever forget that day!" came the solemn response from the Church. The voice of the bell seemed now to be accompanied by chancel choirs. "I remember that when the cross hewn from the Tree of Life was planted on Golgotha the great Feast of the Passover took place on Mount Moriah. The Israelites, in festal attire, entered the courts of the Temple bearing

long poles, upon which hung the lambs for the sacrifice; when the courts were overthronged with people the huge copper gates closed; by a blast of trumpets the signal was given to begin the celebration. The lambs were then hung between the pillars and slaughtered; priests standing in line caught the blood of the sacrificial lambs in vessels of silver and gold. So much blood flowed that the stones of the court ran red. But the moment the Crucified died on Golgotha, the feast of sacrifice in the Temple was broken. A great darkness fell upon the sanctuary, the whole structure was shaken as by an earthquake. The Babylonian curtain was rent in twain, as a sign that the power and the glory and the sanctity had passed from Moriah to Golgotha."

"Golgotha was also shaken by the earthquake," the first voice interposed. "The whole mountain was rent."

"Yea, verily," came the response in full chantlike tones, "there was a great rent in the rock of Golgotha! and through it the blood from the Cross flowed down into the grave in the rock, thus making known to the First Sinner and the First High Priest the consummation of the Atonement."

At that moment the Church sent forth a succession of deafening peals, while from the minaret of the Mosque went up one of those long plaintive cries that call the faithful to prayer. The woman knew from this that one of the holy hours of the night had struck; but coming, as it did, so close upon the discourse on the Crucifixion, it seemed to her as if the two old voices had

taken this occasion to give vent to their pride and their humiliation.

This noise had barely subsided, when the Rock, in a solemn voice, began again: "I am the Eternal Rock, but what is Golgotha? I am what I am and all know where to find me, but where is Golgotha? Where is the mound on which the cross was raised? No one knows. And where is the tomb in which Jesus was laid? None can with certainty point out the spot."

Instantly came the rebuke from Golgotha: "Must you also come with these imputations! You should know better, for you are old enough to remember where Golgotha lies. These thousands of years you have seen the hill in its place, near the Gate of Righteousness."

"I am indeed old, very, very old," said the Rock. "But you have observed that the old have a poor memory. There were many barren hills outside Jerusalem; so how should I be able to remember which was Golgotha? As there are countless numbers of graves in the rocks, how can I know which is the right one?"

The woman was fast losing patience. She felt half-tempted to chime in. Did these wonderful voices sound in her ear only to repeat old sayings she had heard long ago? She longed to cry out that they should reveal to her the deep mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but the two old temples had not a thought for anything but their petty dispute over which was the greater in power and sanctity.

Even the voice of the bell sounded impatient. "It is

tiresome having to refute, over and over again, this charge that I am not what I claim to be," it seemed to say. "You must remember that even the Early Christians were wont to visit me, to revive memories of the great events which had taken place on and around Golgotha."

"That may be true enough," replied the voice of the Rock, "but I am almost certain the Christians lost sight of you among the new streets and houses, when the city was extended and Herod Antipas built the new wall around it."

"They did not lose sight of me," answered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. "They continued to gather on Golgotha up to the time of the siege of Jerusalem, when they departed the city."

To this there was no response from the voice of the Rock; it seemed as if overcome by the sorrowful memories thus evoked.

"Your Temple was wholly destroyed," cried the voice of the Church; "the sacred site was a mass of ruins. For six centuries, O Rock, you lay buried beneath dust and ashes."

"What are a few centuries to me?" spoke the ancient voice. "There has never been doubt as to my place, but about you they are forever disputing."

"How can there be any question as to where I stand, when a miracle of God brought me to light again?" answered the Church. "Hast forgotten that the Empress Helena, who was a Christian and a saint, received in a dream a command from God to go to the Holy Land and

build shrines on its sacred sites. How well do I recall the day the Empress, with her retinue of pious and learned men, came to Jerusalem! At that time there was in the midst of the city a temple of Venus, which had been erected by Emperor Hadrian on a spot sacred to the Christians. This temple was pulled down by order of Empress Helena. It was found to have been built upon Golgotha. Under the foundation stones were found intact—and thus preserved to posterity—the Holy Sepulchre and the Rock of Golgotha, with Melchisedek's grave and the rent, through which it was said that blood still flowed. They found the Stone of Unction and——"

The voice of the Church was interrupted by a derisive laugh, which seemed to come from the Mosque.

"Hear the final and most conclusive proof," continued the voice of the Church, undaunted. "The Empress wished above everything to find the Holy Cross. After a long and futile search, when she had almost given up hope, there came to her one day an old and wise man, who told her the Cross had been buried deep in the ground. The old man pointed out the place. The workmen had to dig far down, for the Cross had been thrown into a moat, which was filled in with earth and stone. I still remember the pious Empress sitting at the edge of the moat encouraging her men! And I also remember the day they found the Cross at the bottom. Many miracles followed upon the recovery of the Cross. I doubt that even you dare deny them, for you have heard the joyful shouts of the sick who were healed on

beholding this sacred relic. And think of the hosts of pilgrims that came hither from every land, and the convents and churches that sprang up, as it were, out of the ground! Or have you forgotten, O Rock, the splendid structures which Constantine and his mother caused to be raised? On the spot where the Cross was found a Basilica was built, and over the rock cave of the Holy Sepulchre was erected a beautiful circular church. Dost remember the long trains of caravans winding across the hills laden with gold and many kinds of costly stone to be used for the ornamentation of the church? Dost remember the pillars of porphyry, with their capitals of silver, and the mosaic arches of the Church of the Sepulchre? Dost remember the narrow windows, through which light streamed mellowed by panes of stained glass and alabaster? the twin columns? and the fine dome that crowned the edifice? At the heart of the sanctuary, unadorned amid all this splendour, was the cave of the Holy Sepulchre. You know that all the Christians of the East looked upon Jerusalem as their Holy City, and that pilgrims were no longer the only people who gathered here. Bishops and priests came and built themselves churches and palaces near the Holy Sepulchre. You have seen the patriarch of the Armenians establish his hierarchy here, and the patriarchs of the Greeks and Assyrians theirs. You have seen Copts from old Egypt and Abyssinians from the heart of Africa draw hither. You have seen Jerusalem rebuilt as a city of churches and cloisters, of hospices and missions. You

know that its glory became greater than ever before. But all this was my work, O Rock! At that time you lay unnoticed and forgotten under a heap of ashes."

Thus challenged, the sanctuary of the Rock answered: "What are a few short years of humiliation to me! After all, I am what I am. Some hundreds of years slipped by, and then one night there came to me a venerable man in the striped mantel of the Bedouin, his head covered with a turban of camel's hair. That man was Mahomet, Prophet of God, who living ascended into Heaven. His left foot rested upon my crown just before he was translated, and I, by my own strength, rose several feet from the earth in my yearning to follow him. I raised myself above dust and ashes. I am that which is forever fixed."

"You forsook your own people, you traitor!" cried the Church. "You helped put false believers in power."

"I have no people, and serve none. I am the Eternal Rock. He who worships me, him I protect. There came a day when Omar made his entry into Jerusalem. The great Caliph at once began to clear the Temple place, himself taking a basket of remnants on his head and carrying it away. And then the followers of Omar erected upon me the most glorious edifice the East has ever seen."

"Yes, the building is beautiful," rang the voice of the bell. "But do you know what it is? Think you that I do not recognize that fine mosaic dome, those mosaic arches and those marble walls, within which you repose in unadorned simplicity, as the Holy Sepulchre once

rested in the church of Saint Helena? Your mosque is patterned after the first Church of the Sepulchre."

The woman grew more and more disheartened; the contentions of the two sanctuaries seemed to her both mean and deplorable. They had not a thought for the two great religions they stood for, but only boasted about their buildings.

"I remember many things," said the Mosque, "but I do not recall having seen the beautiful Church of the Sepulchre of which you speak."

"Verily, it once stood on Golgotha, but enemies soon destroyed it. It was rebuilt and again destroyed."

"There were many buildings on Golgotha, both large and small, which were said to be holy," spoke the voice of the Rock. "They were poor and dilapidated structures, where the rains came in through holes in the roofs."

"Yes, truly," answered the Church. "That was your time—a time of darkness. But I can say with you, what are a few years of humiliation to me? I have seen all the Western World rise to help me. I have seen Jerusalem conquered by men of Europe who came here because of me. I have seen your mosque transformed into a Christian church and crusaders build an altar upon you, O Rock. I have seen Knights of the Cross lead their horses under the arches of your temple."

The old Rock lifted up its voice and sang as a dervish would sing on the desert, but it could not stem the flow of words issuing from the Church.

"I remember how the Knights from the West took off

their coats of mail, and, as masons, seized mallets and trowels and set to work rebuilding the Church of the Sepulchre. They made it large enough to hold all the holy places and covered the gray sepulchre with white marble, both outside and in."

"What matters it that you were built by Crusaders?" the first voice said. "You are again fallen into decay."

"I am filled with sacred relics and holy spots!" cried the Church of the Sepulchre, exultingly. "Within my walls may be seen the olive shrub in which Abraham found the ram, and the chapel where Adam's skull is enshrined. I can point to Golgotha; to the tomb; to the stone where the angel was seated when the women came to weep over the dead. Within my walls is the spot where the Cross was found. I have the pillar by which the Crucified stood when He was crowned with thorns, and the sword of Godfrey of Boulogne. I am still worshipped by Copts and Abyssinians, by Armenians and Jacobites, by Greeks and Romans. I am crowded with pilgrims——"

"What do you mean, you mound! you sepulchre! the place of which no one knows," thundered the old voice. "Would you compare your potency to that of the Eternal Rock? Upon me is inscribed Jehovah's Most Holy, unutterable Name, which none save Christ has been able to interpret. To the court of my Temple Mahomet shall descend on the Last Day."

As the quarrel of the churches increased in violence, the woman rose to her feet; she forgot for the moment

that her voice was too weak to be heard above these two mighty voices.

"Woe unto you!" she cried out. "What kind of holy temples are you? You strive and contend, and because of your dissensions the world is filled with unrest, and hatred, and persecution. Hear this: God's last word to mankind is Unity. God's last edict. which I have heard, spells unity of the Spirit."

When these words were spoken the voice of the Rock and the voice of the Sepulchre were mute. For an instant the woman wondered if her utterances had silenced them; and then she noticed that all the crosses and all the crescents on the great domes of the Holy City began to shimmer and shine. The sun rose above the Mount of Olives, and the voices of the night were stilled.

BOOK ONE

BO INGMAR MANSSON

AMONG those who had belonged to Helgum's community in America and had gone with their leader to Jerusalem were three members of the old Ingmarsson family. They were the two daughters of Big Ingmar who went to America soon after their father's death, and their cousin Bo Ingmar Mansson, a young man who had spent two or three years in the United States.

Bo was a tall, well built, blond-haired youth, with a fine countenance. There was very little about his general appearance that was like the old Ingmars, but the family traits showed themselves when he had some difficult work in hand, or was deeply stirred.

When as a lad Bo had attended Storm's School, he was thought to be dull and slow. The schoolmaster had often wondered how one who came of such intelligent people could be so dense. All this disappeared, however, when Bo was in America. Over there he proved to be both clever and resourceful; but in his childhood he had so often been called a dunce, that there still clung to him a certain diffidence and lack of self-confidence.

The people of his home parish were not a little surprised when Bo betook himself to America! His parents, who were well-to-do farmers, would have liked to keep their

son at home. It had been whispered about that Bo was in love with the schoolmaster's daughter, Gertrude, and had gone away to forget her, but nobody really knew the right of it. Bo had never made a confidant of anyone except his mother, who, it seems, was not a sister of Big Ingmar for nothing! She could not be tempted to say a word more than she wanted to say.

The day Bo left for America his mother gave him a belt, into which she had sewn some money, and asked him to wear it next his body. "Promise me never to part with this belt unless you come to want," his mother had said. "It is not a large sum I'm giving you—only enough to take you home again in case you can't make your way over there."

Bo promised not to touch the money in the belt, and he faithfully kept his word. True, he had not been sorely tempted to use the money, as on the whole he had done rather well in America. Once or twice, however, when out of work, he had gone hungry and been without a place to lay his head; yet he had always found a way out of his difficulty, without touching his mother's money.

When Bo joined the Helgumists he was a little concerned at first as to what he should do with the belt. His new friends tried to follow the example of the Early Christians; they shared their possessions with one another and gave all their earnings to the common fund. Bo also gave up all he had, save what was in the belt. He could not determine what was right or what was wrong in a case like this; but something told him not to part with this

money. And he felt very sure Our Lord would understand it was not from meanness that he withheld it, but because he was in duty bound to keep the promise made to his mother.

He kept the belt even after he had joined the Gordonites, though the thought of it troubled him now. Bo soon learned to know Mrs. Gordon and her helpers, and revered them for their goodness and self-sacrifice. He wondered what these people would think of him if they knew that he was secretly carrying money about with him, although he had solemnly promised to give all he had to the colony.

Helgum and his followers had come to Jerusalem early in May, just at the time when the peasants in his home parish, in Dalecarlia, were selling their farms. In June word came by letter that the Ingmar Farm had been sold, and that Ingmar Ingmarsson had given up Gertrude in order to get back the old ancestral home.

Until then Bo had been very happy in Jerusalem and had often expressed his joy at being there. But from the day he learned that Gertrude was free he became gloomy and taciturn.

No one knew what had made Bo so low-spirited. Some of the brethren tried to make him confide in them, but he would not tell anybody what was troubling him. He could not turn to the colonists for sympathy in an affair of the heart, as they were always preaching that, for the sake of unity, one must not love one person more than another, and averred they loved everybody equally well.

Had they not all, Bo included, vowed never to marry, but to live in chastity, as do monks and nuns?

Bo never for a second thought of his vow after hearing that Gertrude was free. He wanted to sever his connection with the colony at once, and go home to pay court to her. Now he was very glad he had kept the money-belt, and could leave for Sweden whenever he wished.

The first few days he went about in a daze, with only one thought in his head—to find out when there was a steamer leaving Jaffa; but it happened that no ship was to sail from that port just then. All at once it dawned on Bo that for the sake of appearances it would be better to put off the journey for a while. If he went back now, he thought, the whole parish would know it was because of Gertrude; and should he fail to win her, people would only laugh at him.

Just at that time Bo had agreed to do some masonry work for the colonists, who had recently rented a big house outside the Damascus gate, in anticipation of the arrival of the Swedish peasants, and were therefore busy putting the house in order. He had been assigned the task of building a bake-oven, so he made up his mind to be patient, and not to go until this work was completed.

But all the while Bo longed to get away, and now Jerusalem was to him hardly better than a prison. At night, in his room, he would take off his belt and finger the coins through the fabric. As he did so, he could see Gertrude as it were before him, and he would forget that she had never taken the slightest notice of him. He

felt quite sure he had only to go home to make her his wife. When Ingmar had proved so false, surely Gertrude must in the end come to love him, who had always loved her.

Bo found it dreadfully slow work building that oven! Either he was not a skilled mason or his bricks and mortar were poor. He began to think he would never be able to finish it. Once the arch caved in, and once he laid his bricks so irregularly that the smoke blew into the bakery instead of going up the chimney.

Consequently, he was not ready to start until the middle of August. In the meantime he saw much of the Gordonites, and their life, and thought better and better of them. Never had he seen people devote themselves so untiringly to the service of the sick, the poor, the sorrowing. They did not yearn for the things of this world, although some of them were rich enough to have gratified their every wish, while others were so learned that there was scarcely anything under the sun they did not know about. Every day they held beautiful meetings, at which they explained their teachings to the newcomers. When Bo heard them speak, he thought it so great a privilege to be allowed to take part in the revival of the true Christianity, which had lain dormant and well nigh forgotten for nearly two thousand years, that he wanted to remain in Jerusalem.

But at night, when Bo sat with the belt in his hands, his longing for Gertrude mastered him. Then, if he happened to think that his going would deprive him of any

part in the restoration of the only true Christianity, he said to himself that there were so many others to carry out this work, who were far more worthy than he was, it would be a small loss if a poor wretch like him left the colony.

What Bo dreaded was the moment when he would have to stand up in meeting and tell the brethren he had decided to go home. He shuddered at the thought that Mrs. Gordon, and old Miss Hoggs, and beautiful Miss Young, and Helgum, and his own cousins—these people whose only desire was to serve God—would look upon him as lost. And what would God Himself think of his deserting? Perhaps he was forfeiting his soul's salvation by abandoning this great cause.

He felt now that he had done wrong in keeping his mother's money. But for that belt he would have been spared this sore temptation to run away.

The colonists were at that time very short of funds, due in part to the cost of moving into larger quarters, and in part to a lawsuit that had been brought against them in America. Besides, there were many of Jerusalem's poor who constantly appealed to them for aid. As they never took pay for their work, believing, as they did, that money was the cause of all the dissension in the world, it was not surprising that they were often in hard straits. Sometimes, when the expected remittances from America were overdue, they had not sufficient for the day. The colonists were frequently on their knees imploring God for help. At such times Bo felt as if the belt burned him.

Yet his longing for Gertrude was so intense that he could not think of giving up the money. Anyhow, it was too late now, he told himself; he could not confess that he had been carrying gold about him during these times of need.

Bo's oven was finished at last, and he wanted to leave by the first steamer. So one day he betook himself to a secluded spot, and ripped the belt open. Sitting with the gold pieces in his hands, he felt like a criminal. "O God, forgive me!" he gasped. "Had I ever dreamed that Gertrude would some day be free, I would not have joined these people."

On his way to the city Bo imagined someone was following him, and when he laid a few of his gold pieces on the counter at a money changer's in David Street, he looked so guilty that the Armenian who weighed his gold, thinking him a thief, gave him less than half value in exchange.

Early the next morning he stole away from the colony, walking eastward toward the Mount of Olives—so that anyone meeting him would not suspect where he was going—taking a roundabout way to the railway station.

He reached the station an hour before train-time, and waited in an agony of suspense. He started every time someone went past him, and tried in vain to persuade himself that he had not acted wrongly; that he was a free man and could go where he liked. He saw now that it would have been better for him if he had spoken frankly with his friends the colonists, instead of sneaking away

from them like this. He was so unhappy that he wanted to turn back.

Nevertheless Bo left by the train. The carriages were crowded, but he saw no one he knew. His mind was on the letters that must be written to Mrs. Gordon and Helgum—he seemed to hear them read aloud to the brethren after morning prayers, and to see contempt depicted on every face. "I'm doing a dreadful thing!" he told himself. "I am putting a blot upon my character that can never be effaced." His running away appeared more and more reprehensible. He hated himself for being a miserable coward.

Bo left the train at Jaffa. Crossing the sun-baked square in front of the station, he came upon a company of poor Roumanian pilgrims and stood a moment looking at them. A Syrian dragoman told him that these people were very ill when they landed from the ship that brought them to Jaffa, and had been lying out in the hot sun all day. They had intended to go on foot to Jerusalem, but were now unable to move. The dragoman feared they would die unless some one cared for them.

Bo hurried away from the station; but he could not shut out the sight of the fever-stricken pilgrims, some of whom were too helpless to even brush away the flies that crawled over their eyes. It almost seemed as if God had sent these poor people in Bo's way, that he might help them. Bo knew that not another member of the colony would have passed by these sufferers without

trying to succor them. And he, too, would have come to their aid, had he not been such a selfish wretch. Just because he had money and could go home to Sweden he no longer wished to serve his fellowmen.

Passing through the city gate, he went on till he came to a little square on the water-front. Before him lay the open sea, now smooth and silvery-blue, save round the two black rocks of basalt at the entrance to the harbour—where there was a slight ground-swell. It was a perfect day to set out on a journey. In the roads lay a big European liner flying the German flag. He had wanted to take passage on a French ship that was due to arrive at Jaffa that day, but seeing no sign of her he decided not to wait.

The German steamship had just arrived. A swarm of ferrymen hurriedly got their dingeys ready to row out for the passengers. In their eagerness to be first, they hooted and shrieked and threatened each other with the oars. Then, in a moment, nearly a score of boats put out—all at the same time. The big brawny oarsmen rowed standing, to make better speed. At first they proceeded rather cautiously, until they had got past the two dangerous rocks, when a sharp race began. Bo from the shore heard the men laughing and shouting, as they vied with each other.

He wanted to be off at once. It was all the same to him which steamer he took, just so he reached Sweden. His eye lit upon a small dingey, in which sat an old ferryman, who had not been able to set out with the others.

It seemed to Bo that the dingey had been held back for him; he jumped in, and they pulled away at once.

At first Bo was glad to be off, but before they had gone half a dozen boatlengths he was seized with a terrible dread. What would he say to his mother? he wondered. Could he tell her that he had used her money to bring down upon himself everlasting contempt and disgrace?

He saw before him his mother's deep-lined face, with its firm chin. He remembered that she had a way of coming close up to a person she was talking to, and looking him straight in the eye. If his mother were with him now, she would come very near, and say, "Did you promise to stay with those people, Bo, and help them in their good work?" And he would have to answer, "Yes, Mother." "Then you must keep your word," she would be sure to say,—"it's quite enough with one promise-breaker in the family."

Bo heaved a deep sigh. It was plain now that he could not go home to his mother, with dishonour attached to his name; his only course was to return to the colony.

He ordered the boatman to turn back. The man, not understanding, kept on rowing toward the steamer. Suddenly Bo sprang to his feet and tried to seize the oars. In the struggle, the two men nearly upset the boat. There was nothing for Bo but to sit down again, and let the man take him as far as the steamer. At the same time he grew fearful lest the strength of will to turn back might slip away from him. "If I board the ship perhaps the longing for Gertrude may again get the better of me,"

he thought. "No, no, that must not happen!" Determined to be done with this temptation forever, he thrust his hand into his pocket, drew forth the gold pieces, and flung them into the sea.

Immediately he felt a pang of regret. "Ah! now I have thrown my hope of happiness away—have lost Gertrude for all time!"

When they had rowed some minutes longer, they met a couple of boats, returning from the ship, that were filled with passengers to be landed at Jaffa.

Bo rubbed his eyes. He thought he must be dreaming. It was as if two of the church-boats, which on a Sunday were seen coming down the river at home in Dalecarlia, came gliding toward him on the smooth summer sea. The people in these boats looked as solemn and as serious as did the folk of his home parish, when the long boats laid to at the landing stage below the church knoll.

For a moment Bo could hardly take in what he saw. "Isn't that Tims Halvor over there?" he asked himself, "and isn't that Big Ingmar's daughter Karin, and that Birger Larsson, whom I have so often seen standing in the smithy by the roadside forging nails?"

Bo had been so wrapt in his own musings that it was some little time before it dawned on him that these were the pilgrims from Dalecarlia, arriving a day or two earlier than they were expected.

He stood up and waved his hands, shouting "Good day to you!" One after another the silent people in the boats looked up, and moved their heads a little to

show they recognized him. Bo realized at once that he should not have disturbed them at such a moment. They could not think of anything just then but the solemn advent of setting foot upon the sacred soil of Palestine.

Never had anything appeared more beautiful to Bo than the sight of those stern, rugged faces; he was filled with both joy and regret. "Ah, these are the kind of people that we have at home!" he said to himself, and his longing for the old life and the old scenes became so overpowering that he wanted to jump into the sea, to get back his gold.

In the stern of one boat sat a woman who wore her kerchief drawn so far down over her eyes that he could not see her face; but just as her boat passed his the woman pushed back her kerchief, and glanced up at him.

It was Gertrude.

Bo, overwhelmed with joy, trembled from head to foot. He had to sit down and grasp hold of the seat, to keep from leaping into the sea in order to reach Gertrude the sooner. With tears streaming down his face, he folded his hands and gave thanks to God. Never was man so well repaid for resisting temptation; never had God been so good to any man.

THE MAN WITH THE CROSS

THE MAN WITH THE CROSS

DURING the many years the Gordon Colony had been in existence in Jerusalem there had appeared every day in the streets of the Holy City a man carrying a rough, heavy wooden cross. The man never spoke to anyone, nor did anyone speak to him. Nobody knew whether he was some poor demented creature who believed himself to be the Christ, or just a pilgrim doing penance.

The poor cross-bearer slept at night in a grotto on the Mount of Olives, but every morning at sunrise he could be seen standing at the summit of the hill looking down upon Jerusalem, which lay on the heights below. His eager glance travelled from house to house, from dome to dome, as if he expected that some great change had been wrought over night. Then when he found that all was as usual, he would sigh deeply and go back to his grotto. In a little while he would reappear bearing on his shoulders the huge cross, his head crowned with a wreath of thorns.

Whereupon he invariably wandered down the mountain, dragging his heavy burden through vineyards and olive groves until he came to the high wall encircling the Garden of Gethsemane; here he usually stopped

before a low gate, laid his cross on the ground, and leaned against a door-post, as if waiting for some one. Time and again he would bend down and peer through the keyhole into the garden. If he chanced to see any of the Franciscan monks in charge of Gethsemane moving about among the old olive trees and hedges of myrtle, a look of joyous anticipation would come into his face. But immediately afterwards he would shake his head, knowing that the one whom he sought would not appear.

Taking up his cross again, he wandered down the lower terraces of the mountain into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, in which was the large Jewish cemetery—the end of the cross bumping against the graves and dislodging the small stones that covered them. On hearing the rattle of falling stones, he would pause and look back, thinking that somebody was following him. But seeing no one, he sighed heavily and wandered on, as was his custom.

His sighs became deep groans by the time he reached the bottom of the valley and the task of bearing the heavy cross up the western side of the mountain, atop which Jerusalem lay, was before him. In the burying ground of the Mohammedans he frequently came upon some sorrowing woman, in a long white garment, seated upon one of the low, coffin-shaped gravestones. He would stagger toward her until she, frightened by the noise made by the dragging of the cross over the stones, would turn her face toward him—a face covered with a thick black veil, which made it appear as though there were nothing

behind it; then, with a shudder, he turned away and passed on.

Only with the most painful difficulty did he climb to the top of the hill, where rose the wall of Jerusalem. Turning in on the narrow pathway outside the city wall, he went on toward the Hill of Zion until he came to the little Armenian chapel known as the House of Caiaphas, where he again laid down his cross and looked through a keyhole. Not content with that, he seized the bell-rope and gave it a violent pull. The instant he heard the clatter of slippered feet on the stone-paved court within he smiled and raised his hands to the crown of thorns to remove it. When the church custodian opened the door and shook his head at him, the man bent forward and peered through the half-open door into the little court-yard, where, according to tradition, Peter had denied his Master. Finding the place quite deserted, a look of deep dejection came over his face. Taking up his cross once more, he wandered further.

But he soon quickened his pace, as if impatient eagerness had endowed him with greater strength. Entering the city by the Gate of Zion, he tramped on with his heavy burden until he came to the gloomy gray structure which is held sacred as being the tomb of King David, and which is also said to contain the room where Jesus instituted the Holy Communion.

Here the old man was wont to leave his cross and step into the courtyard. The Mohammedan gate-keeper, who had only angry looks for all other Christians, would

bow down before him whose mind was with God, and kiss his hand. Every time this mark of veneration was accorded the cross-bearer, he would look into the Moslem's face expectantly, then quickly pulling his hand away, he would wipe it on his long coarse mantle, and take up his cross.

Thereupon he would drag himself with exceeding slowness to the northern end of the city, where the Road of Christ's Sufferings winds its dark and gloomy way. While in the crowded streets, he would peer searchingly into every face, then turn away in dumb disappointment. Kindly water-carriers, seeing how he sweated under his heavy burden, would offer him a tin of water, and the vegetable venders would throw him a handful of beans or pistachios. At first he received these little attentions graciously, but later he turned away as though he had expected something quite different and better.

When he came to the Road of Agony he appeared more hopeful than during the first part of his wanderings and groaned less loudly under the weight of his cross. Straightening his back, he looked about him like a prisoner certain of release. He began at the first of the Fourteen Stations of the Cross on the Road of Christ's Sufferings —each of which was designated by a small tablet of stone—but did not stop until he stood before the Convent of the Sisters of Zion, close by the Ecce Homo Arch, where Pilate showed Jesus to the populace. Here he threw down the cross as a burden that he need never take up again, and knocked three times at the convent gate.

Without waiting for it to be opened, he tore the crown of thorns from off his head and flung it to the dogs that lay sleeping outside the convent, confident now that he would find the one he was seeking.

The Sisters knew his knock and presently one of them opened a little wicket in the gate and pushed toward him a small round loaf of bread. He did not take the bread however, but let it fall to the ground. Seized with rage, he stamped his feet and uttered wild shrieks of despair. After a while his usual mien of patient suffering returned; then he picked up the bread and ate it ravenously. Whereupon he took up his discarded crown of thorns and again shouldered his cross.

A few moments later he stood in blissful expectation outside the little chapel known as the House of Saint Veronica, from which he presently turned in disappointment. He moved on from Station to Station, awaiting with renewed confidence his release at the chapel which marks the spot where once stood the Gate of Righteousness, through which Jesus passed out from the city, and also at the place where the Saviour spoke to the women of Jerusalem.

Having thus put behind him the Road of Christ's Sufferings, he began to wander through the town, still anxiously seeking. In the narrow crowded Street of David he proved to be as great an obstruction to traffic as a camel laden with fagots, yet nobody ever swore at him or molested him.

Now and then during these wanderings he strayed into

the narrow portico of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. But there the poor cross-bearer never laid down his burden nor removed his crown of thorns. The instant his eye fell upon the gloomy gray façade he turned and fled. The old penitent was never to be seen at any of the grand religious fêtes—not even at the great Easter Festivals. He seemed to feel that here of all places he would not find what he was seeking.

He usually went down to meet the caravans that unloaded their wares at the Jaffa gate; he would sit for hours outside some hospice, scrutinizing all strangers that passed in and out. After the railway between Jaffa and Jerusalem had been opened, he went down to the station almost every day. He called upon bishops and patriarchs at their residences, and always on a Friday he could be seen standing on the square in front of the Wailing Place, where the Jews were wont to weep over the destruction of their Temple, over the walls that had fallen, over the power that was gone from them, over the great prophets long dead, over the priests who had strayed and the kings who had defied the Almighty.

One beautiful day in August the cross-bearer wandered through the lonely fields outside the Gordon Colony. Walking along the road, he saw a long train of wagons coming from the railway station and moving toward the colony. In these wagons sat a number of grave and solemn looking persons, some of whom were exceedingly plain, with sandy hair, heavy eyelids, and protruding under-lip.

As these people drove by the man did what he was in the habit of doing when new pilgrims arrived in Jerusalem—he rested his cross against his shoulder and lifted his arms toward heaven, his face lighting with joy.

The people in the wagon seeing him started, but not from surprise. It seemed as if they had expected this to be the first sight that would meet their eyes in the Holy City. Some, filled with compassion, stood up and stretched forth their arms, as though wanting to get down from the wagon to help the old man carry his heavy burden.

Several of the colonists who were well acquainted in Jerusalem then explained to the newcomers that he was a poor demented man who went about like this every day, thinking that he was carrying the Cross of Christ and must continue to drag it about until he had found the one who was to bear it in his stead.

The people in the wagons turned and looked back at the man with the cross, who stood the whole time with hands uplifted in an attitude of intense exaltation.

That was the last day the old cross-bearer was seen in Jerusalem. The next morning the lepers encamped outside the gates of the city watched vainly for his coming. He no longer disturbed the mourners at the graveyards, nor troubled the door-keeper of the House of Caiaphas. The pious Sisters of Zion had no further opportunity to furnish him his daily loaf, the Turkish custodian at the Church of the Sepulchre waited in vain to see him enter, then turn and flee, and the kindly water-

carriers wondered at his failure to appear in the crowded streets.

No one knew whether he lay dead in his grotto on the Mount of Olives or whether he had gone back to his distant homeland. The only thing known for a certainty was that he no longer carried his heavy burden, for the morning after the arrival of the Dalecarlian pilgrims the Gordon colonists found the big cross lying on the steps outside their house.

"A CITY OF GOLD, LIKE UNTO CLEAR GLASS"

"A CITY OF GOLD, LIKE UNTO CLEAR GLASS"

AMONG the Dalecarlian peasants who came to Jerusalem was a smith named Birger Larsson. He had been very happy at the thought of the journey, and no one had left home with less regret, nor had anyone looked forward with keener joy to beholding the glory of the Holy City.

But Birger was taken ill almost the moment he stepped ashore at Jaffa, where he had to sit in the broiling sun for hours, before the train started. When he finally got into the hot railway carriage his head ached violently, and when he reached Jerusalem he was so sick that he had to be all but carried out onto the platform.

Bo had telegraphed from Jaffa, to inform the colonists of the arrival of the Dalecarlians, and some of the Swedish-Americans came to meet the train, to greet their friends and relatives. By that time Birger had such a high fever that he did not even recognize his own townfolk, although some of them had been his near neighbors. He knew, however, that he was now in Jerusalem, and wanted to keep up long enough to see the Holy City.

From the railway station, which was at some distance away from the town, nothing could be seen of the city. While there, Birger lay perfectly still, with his eyes closed.

When all were at last seated in the wagons awaiting them, they drove down into the Valley of Hinnom and at the brow of the ridge above them lay Jerusalem.

Lifting his heavy eyelids, Birger glimpsed a city surrounded by a high wall with many towers and battlements, behind which loomed against the sky great domed buildings, and a couple of palm-trees swayed in the mountain breeze.

It was drawing on toward evening, and the sun hung big and red at the edge of the western hills, shedding a bright glow over all the firmament. Even the earth shone in hues roseate and golden. To Birger it appeared as though the light which fell upon the earth did not come from the sun but from the city on the heights, that it emanated from its walls, which shone like burnished gold, and from the towers, that were roofed with clear glass.

He smiled on beholding two suns—the one in the sky and the one on the earth, God's city, Jerusalem. For a moment it seemed as if joy had healed him, but immediately the fever returned and during the remainder of the drive to the Colony House, which lay just beyond the other side of the city, he was unconscious.

Nor did Birger know of the hearty welcome accorded them at the colony. He was too far gone to notice the great house, or the white marble stairway, or the beautiful gallery surrounding the courtyard. He did not see the fine, intelligent face of Mrs. Gordon, when she came out on the steps to greet them, nor old Miss Hoggs of the

owlish eyes, nor any of his other new sisters and brothers. He did not even know when he was carried into a large, light room, which was now to be the home of himself and family, and where a bed was quickly made ready for him.

The next day he was no better, though now and then he had lucid moments when he was greatly troubled lest death should overtake him before he had been in the Holy City and seen its splendour near to. "To think that I have come so far!" he said, "and must now die without ever seeing Jerusalem's palace and its golden streets, where holy men in shining white robes walk about waving palms and singing." He lay grieving over this for days, his fever rising more and more. Even in his delirium he lamented that he should never again behold those shining walls and towers, that protected God's own city.

So great was his despair that two of his Dalecarlian friends, Ljung Björn and Tims Halvor, took pity on him and determined to set his mind at rest, thinking that perhaps he would recover if his longings were satisfied. They made a litter and in the cool of the evening they bore him toward Jerusalem.

Birger, fully conscious now, lay gazing out upon the stony soil and the barren hills. When they came within view of the Damascus gate and the city wall the bearers put down their litter, that the sick man might enjoy the sight he had so longed to see.

He did not say a word, but lay shading his eyes with his hands in an effort to see better. And he saw nothing

but a dingy gray wall, built of stone and clay, like any other wall. The high gateway with its low entrance and its many parapets, looked singularly gloomy.

Lying there, so sick and feeble, he imagined they had not brought him to the real Jerusalem, for the city which he had seen only a few days before, was dazzling as the sun itself.

"How can my old friends and countrymen have the heart to begrudge me a glimpse of the true Jerusalem!' he thought.

The men now carried him down the steep hill toward the entrance. Birger thought they were taking him down into the bowels of the earth. When he had been borne through the gateway, he raised himself a little to see whether they had really brought him into the "Golden City."

Birger was astonished at seeing on all sides only gray houses, and still more so when he saw the maimed and crippled beggars that sat by the gate, and the lean, mangy dogs, lying four and five together on the big refuse-heaps.

Never had he come upon such a sickening stench as met his nostrils here, nor felt such stifling heat! He wondered if there were any winds in the world strong enough to clear an atmosphere like this.

Glancing down at the paving-stones, he noticed that they were crusted with thick layers of ground-in dirt, while the sight of all the cabbage leaves and fruit parings that littered the streets filled him with dismay.

"I can't understand why Halvor should bother to show me this God forsaken place," he muttered.

His friends had visited the city several times since their arrival, and could point out to the sick man the places of interest as they came to them.

"That's the house of the Rich Man," said Halvor, pointing to a building which to Birger appeared ready to cave in.

They turned off into a street which was so dark that to all appearances no ray of sunlight had ever penetrated it. Birger lay gazing up at the arches that spanned across the street joining house to house on either side. "They're certainly needed," he thought. "If these old hovels were not so well supported they'd soon tumble down."

"This is the Road of Christ's Sufferings," Halvor told Birger. "It was here Jesus carried the Cross."

Birger was now pale as death; the blood no longer coursed through his veins, as it had done earlier in the day, and he felt cold as ice.

Wherever they took him he saw nothing but dilapidated gray walls and here and there a low gate. There were hardly any windows to be seen, and the few he saw were broken and the holes stopped with rags.

Again they paused a moment. "This is the spot where the House of Pilate once stood," Halvor explained. "It was here Pilate brought Jesus before the people, and said, 'Behold the Man.'"

Birger Larsson beckoned Halvor to his side and solemnly took him by the hand. "Now tell me one thing,

as cousin to cousin," he said; "is this the real Jerusalem?"

"Oh, yes," replied Halvor, "it's the real one."

"I'm a sick man," said Birger, "and may be gone by morning; so you mustn't lie to me."

"I'm not lying to you."

Birger had hoped that he could make Halvor tell him the honest truth. Tears sprang to his eyes at the thought of his old friends treating him thus. Suddenly a happy thought came to him. "They're doing this—that my joy may be all the greater when they carry me in through the high gates of the city of glory and splendour. I'll let them have it their own way, for, after all, they mean well. We Helgumists have sworn to treat one another as brothers."

The two friends went on with him through the dark streets, some of which were canopied with great rugs full of holes and rents. In these covered places the heat and stench were insufferable.

Their next stop was at the courtyard of a large gray building, where the open space was crowded with beggars and venders of rosaries, small images, willow-canes, and what not.

"Here you see the church that is built over Christ's tomb and Golgotha," said Halvor.

Birger Larsson glanced up at the structure with lustreless eyes; it certainly had great gates and broad windows, and was tolerably high too; but never had he seen a church lie so shut-in between other buildings.

He saw neither spire nor church-porch, so no one could make him believe that this was a house of God. "All these hawkers would not be found here," thought he, "if this were really the place of the Sepulchre of Jesus. For had He not driven the money-changers away from the temple and overturned the cages of those who sold doves?"

"I see, I see," he answered, nodding to Halvor, while thinking to himself: "I wonder what they'll hit upon next?"

"I'm afraid you can't stand any more this time," said Halvor.

"Oh, yes," returned the sick man, "I can stand it if you can!"

So they took up the litter again and moved on. Presently they came to the southern part of the town, where the streets presented much the same aspect as those they had already traversed, only here they were crowded with people. The men stopped a moment so that Birger could see the dark-skinned Bedouins, with guns across their shoulders and scimiters in their belts. Halvor pointed out to him the almost nude water-carriers, who bore their pigskin water-bags on their backs, the Russian priests, who wore their hair coiled at the neck like womenfolk, and the Mohammedan women, who looked like wandering ghosts in their white robes and their faces covered with a black cloth.

Birger became more and more persuaded in his own mind that his friends were fooling him. Certainly

there was nothing about these people to suggest the peaceful palm-bearers that were said to march through the streets of the real Jerusalem.

When they came among the seething throngs Birger's fever returned. Halvor and Ljung Björn saw that he was growing weaker and weaker. His hands moved restlessly on his coverlet and beads of cold sweat stood on his forehead. But when they talked of turning back he started up declaring that he would surely die if they did not take him to where he could see the City of God.

Thus he urged them on until they reached the heights of Zion and when he saw Zion's Gate, he cried out that he wanted to be carried through it. He raised himself now, hoping to find beyond the wall the beautiful City of God for which his soul longed. But once on the other side, he saw only a barren sun-scorched plain, covered with stones, remnants of walls, and heaps of rubbish. Near the gate crouched some poor human wrecks, who crawled over to the litter and held out their hands to the sick man—hands from which the fingers had rotted away—and cried out with voices that sounded like the snarling of a dog. Their faces were partly destroyed; one had no nose, another no cheeks.

Birger screamed aloud in terror. In his weakened condition, he began to weep from fear, thinking his friends had taken him down into hell.

"It's only the lepers," Halvor explained. "You know, Birger, that there are lepers in this land." The men, however, hastened to take him farther up the hill,

that he might be spared the harrowing sight of these unhappy wretches.

Then they put down the litter again and Halvor slipped an arm under the sick man's neck and raised his head from the pillow. "Now you must try to look up, Birger," he said. "From here you can see the Dead Sea and the hills of Moab."

Birger once more raised his weary eyes and gazed out across the desolate mountain region east of Jerusalem. Away in the distance glistened the waters of a sea, and beyond it rose shining blue hills, tipped with gold. It was all so beautiful, so bright and translucent, he could hardly believe that the sight he saw was of this earth.

Enraptured, he sprang from the litter and tried to hasten toward the distant scene. But after a few faltering steps, he sank down unconscious. His friends thought at first that he was dead, but in a while he revived somewhat. He lingered but two days longer and up to the very last he raved in his delirium about the real Jerusalem; he moaned that the Golden City became more and more remote the more he strove to reach it, and that neither he nor any of them would ever enter therein.

GOD'S HOLY CITY, JERUSALEM

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IT IS a well known fact that not many people can endure living in Jerusalem any length of time. Even those who can stand the climate and do not become smitten with contagious diseases frequently go under. The Holy City makes them morose or drives them insane; yes, and it even kills them outright. You cannot stop there a fortnight without hearing people say of this or that person, who has passed away: "Jerusalem has killed him."

Naturally you are filled with astonishment at hearing such things. "How can this be?" you ask yourself. "How can a city kill? Surely these people do not mean what they say." And going about here and there in the city you think: "I wonder what they mean by saying that Jerusalem kills. I should like to know where that dreadful Jerusalem can be which is supposed to cause death!"

So you decide perhaps to make a tour of the city. You go out through the Jaffa gate, turn to the left past the imposing four-cornered Tower of David and wander along the narrow path outside the city wall toward the Gate of Zion. Just inside the wall lie the Turkish barracks, from which you may hear strains of martial music and the din of practice at arms. Then you pass by the big Armenian Cloister, which is also a kind of stronghold,

with its massive walls and gates, locked and barred. A little farther on you come upon the sombre gray structure known as David's Grave; you suddenly realize that you are treading upon Holy Zion, the mountain of the Kings, and you think of the mountain under you as a great arch, where King David, in a golden mantel, sits upon a throne of fire, still wielding the sceptre over Palestine and its Holy City. It dawns upon you that the remnants of walls which cover the ground are the ruins of royal palaces; that the mound opposite is the Rock of Offence, where Solomon fell; that the deep vale into which you are looking—the Valley of Hinnom—was once filled with the bodies of those killed in Jerusalem, when the city was destroyed by the Romans.

A strange feeling comes over you while walking there. You seem to hear the noise of battle, to see great armies advancing to attack the walls of the city, and kings driving through the streets in their chariots. This is the Jerusalem of War and Carnage, you think, horrified by the panorama of abomination and bloodshed that unrolls before your mind.

Then for a moment you wonder if it is this Jerusalem that kills. But immediately you say: "It can't be, for it was so long ago that the din of clashing swords was heard here and the red blood flowed."

And you wander on.

But when you have turned the corner of the wall, and reached the east end of the city, you meet with something quite different. You now are come to the holy

places, and here you think only of ancient High Priests and servants of the Temple. Just inside the wall is the Wailing Place of the Jews, where Rabbins in their long red or blue *caftans* stand weeping over the judgments of Jehovah. And here looms Mount Moriah, with its glorious Temple site. Outside the wall the ground slopes down toward the Valley of Jehoshaphat, with its countless graves, beyond which you glimpse Gethsemane and the Mount of Olives, whence Christ ascended into Heaven. And here you behold the pillar in the wall where 'tis said that Christ shall stand on the Day of Judgment holding one end of a long thread, fine as a hair, while Mohammed will stand upon the Mount of Olives holding the other end, and the dead, on awaking, must cross the Valley of Jehoshaphat on this thread. The righteous will reach the other side, but the wicked shall fall into the fires of Gehenna.

Walking there you think: "This is the Jerusalem of Death and Judgment." Here both Heaven and Hell seem to open before you. "Nor is it this Jerusalem that kills," you say to yourself. "The trumpets of Doomsday are too far away and the fires of Gehenna are extinguished."

Continuing on your way along the encircling wall you presently come to the north side of the city, where you pass through tracts monotonous and desolate. Here lies the naked hill which is probably the real Golgotha; yonder the grotto where Jeremiah wrote his Lamentations, just inside the wall is the Pool of Bethesda and

beneath dismal arches winds the Via Dolorosa. Here is the Jerusalem of Disconsolation; of Suffering; of Anguish; of Atonement.

You pause a while and gaze broodingly upon all this forbidding gloom. "Nor is this the Jerusalem that kills," you think, and pass on.

But going westward and northwest, what a contrast will appear to you! Here in the new part of the town which has sprung up outside the city wall are the palatial homes of the missionaries and the big hotels. Here lies the extensive group of Russian buildings—the church, the hospital, and the many caravansaries, which can harbour twenty thousand pilgrims; here consuls and clergymen build themselves attractive villas and pilgrims wander in and out of the shops where only sacred wares are sold. Here one finds parks, driveways, and broad streets, with fine stores, banking-houses and travel bureaus. On this side are the expansive Jewish and German agricultural colonies, the large convents and the many benevolent institutions; here pass monks and nuns, nurses and deaconesses, missionaries and Russian patriarchs; here reside the men of science who are studying Jerusalem's past and elderly English ladies who cannot live elsewhere. Here are the splendid mission schools, where the pupils are given free instruction, board, lodging and raiment for the sake of winning their souls; here, too, are the mission hospitals, where one begs the sick to come in order to convert them; here are held church services and prayer meetings at which they fight

for souls. It is here the Catholic speaks evil of the Protestant, the Methodist of the Quaker, the Lutheran of the Reformist, the Russian of the Armenian; here lurks the demon of envy; here the zealot mistrusts the worker of miracles; here orthodox contends with heretic; here one finds neither pity nor tolerance; here one hates in the name of God everyone else. And it is here that you find what you have been seeking. This is the Jerusalem of soul hunting; this is the Jerusalem of cruel tongues—of falsehood, of slander, of revilement. Here one persecutes untiringly; here one murders without weapons. It is *this* Jerusalem that kills.

After the arrival of the Swedish peasants, the Gordon colonists noticed a marked change in the general attitude toward themselves. At first it was apparent only in little things. The English Methodist clergyman, for instance, did not return their salutations, and the pious Sisters of Zion, who lived in the convent near the Ecce Homo Arch, would cross to the other side of the street on meeting them, as if afraid of being contaminated by something harmful should they come too close.

None of the colonists seemed to take this to heart. Nor did they attach any special significance to the fact that some American tourists who had spent a whole evening at the colony, chatting with their compatriots, did not come again the next day, as they had promised, and did not appear to know Mrs. Gordon or Miss Young when they met them afterwards in the street. But it

was a more serious matter when some of the young women of the colony on visiting one of the new shops over by the Jaffa gate, were accosted by the Greek merchants who flung some remarks at them which, though they did not understand, were said in a tone and with a look that sent the blood to their faces.

The colonists tried to persuade themselves that it was all due to misapprehension. "Some evil report of us must have been circulated over in the Christian quarter," they said, "but it will soon die out. The old Gordonites remembered other occasions when false rumours had got abroad. It had been said of them that they did not bring up their children properly; that they lived upon the bounty of a rich elderly widow whom they had fleeced unmercifully; that they allowed their sick to die for the want of medical attention, on the ground that they could not interfere with the "workings of Providence"; that they lived in luxury and idleness while pretending to labour for the advancement of true Christianity. "It is something of this sort that has sprung up now," they thought. "The slander will die away, as it died before, since it does not contain a grain of truth to feed upon."

Then it happened that the Bethlehem woman who used to bring them fresh vegetables every day stopped coming. The colonists sought her out and tried to persuade her to come as usual, but she positively refused to sell to them.

They knew from this that something very derogatory

must have been said about them, which concerned them all and had become common talk among high and low.

Before very long they had fresh confirmation of this. Some of the Swedish brethren were in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre one day when a band of Russian pilgrims entered. The good-natured Russians smiled and nodded to them, seeing that they were peasants like themselves. Whereupon a Greek priest, in passing, said something to the pilgrims, who immediately crossed themselves and shook their fists at the Swedes, as if wanting to drive them out of the church.

Not far from Jerusalem there is a colony of German peasants who are Dissenters. They had been in the Holy Land many years, and had suffered persecution both in their own country and in Palestine. People had tried to drive them out. But for all that things had gone well with them, and they had now a large flourishing colony at Caifa and another in Jaffa, in addition to the one in Jerusalem.

One of these Dissenters came to Mrs. Gordon one day and told her of the scandalous reports of her people. "It is the missionaries over there," he said, pointing toward the west, "who are vilifying you. In truth, did I not know from experience that one may be persecuted without cause I should refuse to sell you any meat or flour. But I understand, of course, that they can't bear the thought of your having gained so many converts of late."

Mrs. Gordon then asked him what they were charged with.

"They say that you colonists are immoral; that you do not allow your people to marry, as God has commanded; and therefore they maintain that all is not right here."

At first the colonists would not believe this; but they soon learned that the man had spoken the truth, and that all Jerusalem believed they were living in sin. None of the Christians in the city would speak to them. At the hotels the guests were warned against them. Travelling missionaries, however, would sometimes venture out of the colony. But on their return they would say, with a meaningful shake of the head, that although they themselves had seen nothing shocking, many corrupt practices might be carried on out there that were not apparent to the casual visitor.

The Americans, from the consul down to the humblest sick nurse, were the ones who decried the Gordonites the loudest. "It is a disgrace to us Americans that these creatures are allowed to remain in Jerusalem!" they said.

The colonists were sensible enough to know that they must let matters take their course. Their traducers would doubtless discover in due time that they were in error. "We can't go from house to house and proclaim our innocence," they said. And they took comfort in the thought that they still had each other, and were united

and happy. "The sick and poor of Jerusalem have not shunned us thus far. We must let this ill-wind blow over, for it is only a test of our faith."

At first the Swedes bore the cruel slander very calmly. "If these people out here are so blind as to believe that we poor peasants have come to this land, where our Saviour died, in order to lead loose lives, then their judgment isn't worth much, and what they think of us doesn't matter." And when people continued to treat them with contempt, they rejoiced in the thought that God found them worthy to suffer persecution and scorn in the very place where Jesus had been mocked and crucified.

Then one day, toward the end of September, Gunhild received a letter from her father, Councilman Clementsson, telling her of the death of her mother. Her father did not reproach her; he wrote only of the mother's last illness and the funeral. Evidently the old councilman had meant to be forbearing, knowing how unhappy she would feel over the loss of her mother, for the whole letter was penned in the same gentle way to the very end. But when he had signed it, suppressed anger must have got the better of him; for in a postscript scrawled in bold black letters it said: "Your mother might have got over her grief at your leaving home, but what she read in a missionary paper about the shameful life you lead out there in Jerusalem, killed her. People here expected better things of you and of those in whose company you went away."

Gunhild put the letter in her pocket and carried it about with her the whole day without speaking of it to anyone. There was no doubt in her mind that her father had told the truth as to what had been the cause of her mother's death. Her parents had always been very jealous of their honour and good repute. It was the same with herself; no one in the colony had suffered more keenly than she from being misjudged and maligned. The fact that she was innocent of any wrong-doing was no comfort to her; she felt as if she were disgraced and could never again go out among people. For a long time she had gone about in a state of torment. The malicious tongues had hurt her like as a smarting wound, and now they had caused the death of her mother!

Gertrude and Gunhild shared one room, and the two girls had always been the closest of friends. Yet Gunhild did not even tell Gertrude what her father had written; she felt it would be a pity to spoil her friend's happiness at being in Jerusalem where everything seemed to bring our Saviour nearer to her.

But many times during the day Gunhild drew the letter out of her pocket and looked at it; she did not dare read it again, the mere sight of it made her heart ache. "If I could only die!" she thought. "I can never again be happy. If I could only die!"

She felt that the letter contained a poison that would kill her, and only hoped it would work quickly.

The next day Gunhild passed through the Damascus gate; she had been in the city and was on her

way back to the colony. It was insufferably hot that day, as it often is toward the end of October, before the autumn rains set in. When Gunhild came out from the dingy town where houses and arches gave protection against the sun, the glare of the sunlight caught her like a blow, and she felt tempted to run back into the shade of the gateway. The open sunny road before her looked as dangerous to venture out upon as a rifle-range across which soldiers are firing at a target.

Gunhild would not turn back just for a little sunshine. She had been told, of course, that it was not safe to be out in the heat of the day, but paid no heed to the warning. Instead, she did as one does when caught in a shower; she hunched her shoulders, drew her kerchief farther up on her neck, and ran as fast as she could run.

She fancied the sun held a fiery bow, and was shooting red-hot darts at her. The sun, apparently, had nothing else to do than to take aim at her. All at once a sharp rain of fire beat upon her, and it did not come from the heavens alone. Everything around her flashed and stung her in the eyes; tiny sharp arrows seemed to shoot up from the glittering granules of the road-stones; the green window-panes of a convent at the wayside sparkled so that she dare not glance up at them; the steel key in a door sent out little threatening rays; so did the shining leaves of the castor-bean, which seemed to have survived the summer only to torment her.

Wherever she looked, whether heavenward or earthward, everything glittered and shone. The heat caused

her no great discomfort, intense as it was, but what she most suffered from was the terrible white glare of the sunlight that seemed to penetrate to the back of her eyes and burn into her brain.

Gunhild felt toward the sun as a poor hunted animal must feel toward its pursuers. She had a strange impulse to turn and look her pursuer in the face. She hesitated a moment, then faced about and gazed into the sky.

And there rolled the sun, like a great bluish-white flame! As Gunhild stood blinking at it, the whole sky turned black and the sun shrank to a mere spark, with a malevolent glint. Suddenly it seemed to break away from the heavens and come shooting down to strike and kill her.

With a shriek, she put her hands up to her neck as a shield and ran on a little way down the road, the lime-dust whirling around her in a suffocating cloud. Then she saw a great pile of stones, remnants of a tumble-down house, and hastened toward it. She was fortunate enough to find an opening leading to the cellar, and went down into it; there all was dark and cool.

Standing with her back to the opening, she rested her aching eyes. Nothing here glittered or shone. Now she knew how it must feel to a poor little fox to creep down into its hole when the hunters are after it. The heat and glare outside her retreat were to Gunhild as baffled huntsmen lying in wait.

Gradually her eyes became accustomed to the darkness,

and finding a stone, she sat down to rest. She knew it would not be safe for her to venture out for several hours—not until the sun had sunk so low as to lose its power to harm. But Gunhild had been sitting there only a little while, when a terrible vertigo seized her, and a thousand suns began to dance before her eyes. The cellar seemed to swing round in a continuous circular movement, and she had to lean against the wall to keep from falling.

"O God!" she cried. "It even pursues me here! I must have done something dreadful, or the sun wouldn't hate me so."

Then she thought of the letter, of her mother's death, of her own great sorrow and her wish to die; all of which had vanished from her mind while her life was in peril; then she had only thought of saving herself.

Gunhild quickly drew out the letter, and went toward the opening to read it again. Seeing the words before her eyes in the precise order in which they were fixed in her memory, she moaned aloud. Immediately a thought came that seemed to comfort her: "Can't you see that God intends to let you slip away from this life?"

She thought this very beautiful and regarded it as a special grace from God. She could not fully grasp its import, for her mind was in a daze. The vertigo had returned, the whole cellar whirled again, and a streak of fire danced close before her eyes.

But she still clung to the belief that God was offering her a means of escape from this world, so that she

could go to her mother in heaven, and be free from all sorrow.

Then she stepped out into the sunshine as calmly as though she were walking up the aisle at church. She felt a little cooler now, and coming out, she saw no pursuers, or gleaming spears, or red-hot arrows.

She had not gone many steps, however, before they were after her again, as if they had come rushing from ambush. Everything on the earth glittered and flashed while from behind the sun shot piercing rays at her neck. Suddenly she fell to the ground as if struck by lightning.

A few hours later some one from the colony found her lying in the road with one hand pressed aginst her heart and the other hand stretched out clutching a letter, as if to show what had killed her.

ON THE WINGS OF THE MORNING

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ON THE day that Gunhild died Gertrude happened to be walking in one of the broad streets of the western suburb. She had gone out to buy some buttons and tape, but not being well acquainted with that locality she had to tramp about a long while to find what she wanted. She had not yet seen much of Jerusalem and was in no haste to get back to the colony. She had come away from Sweden with a limited supply of clothing, and had therefore been obliged to stay indoors most of the time since her arrival, sewing for herself.

When Gertrude went about in the Holy City there was always a happy smile upon her face. She must have felt the terrible heat and blighting sunshine, but they did not seem to affect her as they did others. She could hardly take a step without thinking that Jesus had walked on the very ground where she was now walking, and that His gaze had often rested on the hills she glimpsed in the distance. The heat and the dust must have been rather trying to Him, too, just as they were to her. These thoughts brought Him so near that all sense of discomfort was dispelled by a feeling of blissful gladness.

What had made Gertrude so happy since coming to Palestine was this sense of being so much nearer to Jesus

than before. It never entered her mind that nearly two thousand years had elapsed since He wandered here with His disciples. She went about blissfully imagining that He had been here only a short time ago; she seemed to see His footprints on the ground and to hear the echo of His voice in the streets.

Going down the steep hill leading to the Jaffa gate, she met a party of some two hundred Russian pilgrims coming up the street; they had tramped around in the hot sun for hours, visiting the holy places outside Jerusalem, and were so tired and spent they had hardly strength enough left to drag themselves up to the Russian hospice at the top of the hill.

Gertrude stopped to look at them as they passed. They were simple folk, and she was surprised to see how like they were to her own people in their wadmal coats and knitted jackets. "This must be a whole parish come in a body to Jerusalem," thought she. "The man with the spectacles far down on his nose is the schoolmaster, and the one with the big stick owns a large farm and rules the whole parish. The one over there, who carries himself so erect, is an old soldier, and that chap with the narrow chest and the long thin hands is the village tailor."

She was in a cheerful mood and from force of habit made up little stories about the people she saw. "The old woman with the silk kerchief on her head is rich," she mused, "but she wouldn't go away from home until her sons and daughters were married and settled in life and

she had helped bring up her grandchildren. The bent old woman walking next to her, carrying a little bundle, is very poor. She has had to toil hard and stint all her life to lay by the money for a pilgrimage to Jerusalem."

Only to see these people was to like them. Hot and dusty though they were, they looked serenely happy. There was not a cloud of discontent on any face. "How good and patient they must be!" thought Gertrude, "and how great their love for Jesus, since they are so glad to be wandering about in His land that they don't seem to mind discomfort."

At the end of the procession came a few who seemed too utterly exhausted to keep up. It was touching to see their comrades turn back to help them up the hill. Last of all came a girl of about seventeen, who was almost the only young person among them—the others being mostly either elderly or middle-aged people. Gertrude thought the young girl, like herself, had suffered some great sorrow, which had rendered life at home unbearable. Perhaps she, too, had seen Jesus in the forest and had been told by Him to go to the Holy Land.

The young woman looked ill. She was slight of build and her coarse heavy clothes, more especially the thick clumsy boots which she, like all the other women, wore seemed to tire her greatly. She would take a few faltering steps, and then stand still to recover her breath. Continually stopping thus in the middle of the street, the girl was in danger of being knocked down by a camel or run over by a passing wagon.

Feeling that she ought to help her, Gertrude hastened forward and put her arm around the girl's waist, to support her. The girl looked at her wearily; she accepted the support almost unconsciously, letting herself be dragged along.

At that moment one of the older women happened to turn round; she scowled at Gertrude, and shouted something in a sharp tone to the sick girl, who instantly drew herself up, pushed Gertrude aside and tried to walk on alone.

Gertrude could not comprehend why the girl should behave like that. She wondered if it was because the Russians were unwilling to accept aid from a stranger. The girl halted again, and Gertrude ran back and once more put an arm round her. At that, a look of loathing came over the young woman's face and, tearing herself free, she struck at Gertrude and attempted to run away from her.

Then Gertrude saw that the poor soul was actually afraid of her, and knew at once it was on account of the base slanders that had been circulated about the Gordonites. She was both grieved and angry. The only thing she could do now was to leave the girl alone, so as not to frighten her still more. Following her with her eyes, she noticed that the girl, in her confusion and fright, ran straight toward a team that was coming down the hill at top speed. Gertrude saw, to her horror, that she would certainly be run over.

She tried to shut her eyes to it all; but she seemed to

have lost control of herself, and could not even lower her eye-lids. So she stood there with wide-open eyes and saw the horses run straight against the girl and knock her down. Immediately the fine intelligent animals backed, planted their hoofs firmly on the ground, so as to take the full weight of the down-coming wagon; then quickly swerving to one side, they went around without hoof or wheel having touched the girl.

As the young Russian woman remained lying on the ground without moving, Gertrude supposed she had fainted from fright. People came running from all sides, but Gertrude being the first to reach her, bent down to help her up. Then she saw blood oozing from a wound in the girl's head, and noticed that her features were becoming strangely rigid. "She is dead!" gasped Gertrude. "And it's all my fault!"

A man rudely thrust her aside. He roared something at her, which she understood to mean that so vile a creature as herself was not fit to touch this pious young pilgrim. Instantly the man's cry was taken up on all sides. Threatening hands were raised against her; she was pushed and elbowed out of the crowd that had gathered about the girl.

Gertrude clenched her hands, indignant at this treatment. She wanted to fight her way back to find out whether the girl was alive or dead. "It is not I who am unworthy to approach her," she cried out in Swedish, "it is you—all of you! It is you who have killed her. Your slandering tongues sent her to her death!"

No one understood a word of what she said and her anger soon gave way to a paralyzing dread. What if someone had seen how it all happened and should tell the others about it! Then all these people would surely fall upon her and beat her to death, she thought.

Gertrude hurriedly fled from the scene, though no one was pursuing her, never once stopping until she had reached the lonely district outside the northern limits of the city. Then she stood still a moment and pressed her clenched hands against her forehead.

"O God in Heaven!" she exclaimed. "Am I responsible for the death of a fellow-being?"

She turned toward Jerusalem, whose high dark wall rose before her. "No!" she cried, "not I, but you! Not I, but you!" With a shudder, she turned away from the city to go back to the Colony House, the roof of which she could see in the distance. Time after time she stopped and tried to untangle the thoughts that crowded in upon her.

When Gertrude came to Palestine she said to herself: "Here I am in my Lord and King's own country, under His special protection; here no harm can come to me." She had lulled herself into the belief that Christ had commanded her to come to His Holy Land because He felt that she had known so great a sorrow that there was no further need for her to suffer in this life and that she was henceforth to live in peace and safety.

But now Gertrude felt as one living in a strongly fortified city who suddenly sees the protecting walls and battle-

ments fall. She saw that she was defenseless. Between her and aggressive evil there was no bulwark. It seemed as if misfortune could strike harder here than elsewhere.

She promptly dismissed the thought that she was to blame for the death of the young Russian woman; she would not have that on her conscience. Yet she felt a vague fear of the harm this happening might cause her. "I shall always see those horses bearing down upon her!" she said, "and I can never be happy any more."

A doubt arose in her which she instantly tried to stifle, but which came up again and again. She wondered why Christ had sent her to this land. Of course she knew it was very wrong of her to question this, but she could not help it. What had He meant by sending her here?"

"Dear Lord, I thought that you loved me and would do everything for my good. I was so happy in the faith that you protected me!"

When Gertrude got back to the colony a strange stillness and solemnity pervaded the place. The lad who opened the gate looked uncommonly grave, and coming into the courtyard she noticed that everyone moved about very quietly and spoke only in whispers. "Death has entered this house," she thought, before anyone had said a word.

She soon learned that Gunhild had been found lying dead at the roadside and that her body had been brought home and placed on a bier in the basement. She knew that in the East the dead must be buried very quickly, yet she was horrified to find that preparations for the

funeral were already under way. Tims Halvor and Ljung Björn were making a coffin and two of the old women were dressing the body. Mrs. Gordon had gone to see the superintendent of an American mission to ask for a permit to bury Gunhild in the American Cemetery. Gabriel and Bo, each with his spade, stood waiting in the courtyard for Mrs. Gordon's return—ready to go dig the grave. Gertrude went down to the basement. She stood a long time looking at Gunhild, then broke into violent sobs. She had always been very fond of the girl who now lay dead, and as she gazed at the still, white face of her friend, it came to her that neither she, Gertrude, nor any of the others had ever given to Gunhild the love she had merited. Everyone knew that she was honest and kind and truth-loving; but she had made life a burden to herself and to others, by attaching too much importance to trifles, and that had turned people against her. Remembering this, Gertrude felt that it had been terribly hard for poor Gunhild.

Suddenly she stopped crying and regarded Gunhild in fear and trembling. There was a look on the face of the dead—a look it had worn in life, when the girl had pondered over something perplexing.

Then she stole softly out of the room. The questioning look on Gunhild's face reminded her of her own doubts and fears. She fancied that Gunhild also wondered why Jesus had sent her to this land.

When Gertrude returned to the courtyard Bo came up and asked her to go talk to Gabriel. She stared vacantly

at him, for she was so completely absorbed by her own thoughts that she did not even know what he was saying.

"It was Gabriel who found Gunhild," Bo told her.

Gertrude did not hear him; she was still wondering why Gunhild had that look on her face.

"It was a terrible shock to poor Gabriel to find her lying dead in the road," Bo went on, "as he was coming along never dreaming of what had happened." As Gertrude did not yet appear to understand, he said in a voice that shook with emotion: "If I were to find somebody that I cared a lot about lying dead on the ground, I don't know what would become of me."

Gertrude looked as one who had just come out of a dream. Why, to be sure, she knew of old that Gabriel was fond of Gunhild. They would have been married but for this pilgrimage to Jerusalem; they had decided to come to Palestine, though it meant that they could never be husband and wife. And now Gabriel had found Gunhild lying dead in the roadway!

"It would be well for Gabriel if he could have a good cry," Bo whispered to her.

Gertrude then went over to Gabriel, who was standing at the gate with eyes fixed, and with lips compressed—working his spade in and out between two stones.

She silently gave Gabriel her hand, as one does to the bereaved at a funeral. His hand lay cold and impassive in hers.

"Bo tells me it was you who found her," she said; Gabriel never moved.

"It was hard for you," she continued, while Gabriel stood like a figure in stone. Then Gertrude at last realized what his grief must be. "I think Gunhild would have been glad had she known it was you who found her."

Gabriel started. "Do you think she would have been glad of that?" he asked, looking hard at Gertrude.

"Yes," she answered.

"I carried her home as tenderly as I could," said Gabriel quietly.

"I'm sure you did," Gertrude replied.

Then Gabriel's lips began to quiver and all at once the tears gushed from his eyes. He leaned his head against the gate-post, and sobbed violently. Gertrude and Bo stood silently by and let him weep. In a while when he had grown calmer, he went over to Gertrude and gave her his hand.

"Thank you for making me cry," he said in a soft steady voice. It seemed as if his father, old Hök Matts, were speaking. "Now I'm going to show you something I had meant never to let anyone see. When I found Gunhild, her hand was clutched round this letter, of which I took possession, thinking I had every right to it. It is from her father. As both of you have parents back home, I want you to read it."

Gertrude read the letter; then looked at Gabriel. "So that was the cause of her death," she said.

Gabriel nodded.

Gertrude cried out in despair: "O Jerusalem! Jeru-

salem! thou wilt kill us all! I fear God has forsaken us."

Mrs. Gordon had just come in at the gate. She told Gabriel and Bo to go at once to the burying ground. Gertrude straightway went into the house and to the little room she and Gunhild had occupied together, where she remained in solitude the whole evening. She was in a state of terror as unconquerable as the fear of ghosts, imagining that some other dreadful thing was going to happen before the day was over. At the same time she was filled with doubt. "I don't know why the Lord sent us here," she thought. "We bring disaster and misery to ourselves and to others."

Then for a moment she seemed to conquer her doubts, but she presently found herself enumerating the different ones to whom the pilgrimage had brought misfortune. They had all been so certain it was God's will they should come to Palestine. Then why had their coming resulted in nothing but misery?

She had taken out pen and paper to write to her parents. "What could I say to make them understand?" she wondered. "If I were to lie down and die like Gunhild, then perhaps they would believe me, if I wrote that we were innocent."

Night came, but Gertrude was too unhappy for sleep. She saw continually before her Gunhild's brooding face and became convinced that her friend had died with the same question on her lips that she herself was striving to solve.

Before dawn Gertrude arose and dressed to go out. She seemed to have got so far away from Christ that she hardly knew how she should find her way back to Him. Now she longed to go to a place where He was known to have walked when on this earth, and the only spot the exact location of which had never been disputed was the Mount of Olives. Could she go there, she thought, then she would be near to Him again, would feel herself overshadowed by His love, and understand His purpose with her.

Coming out in the dense darkness that precedes the dawn, her fears became intensified; again and again she went over in her mind all the sorrow and injustice which the past day alone had brought. Then, as she went up the hill, a marvellous feeling of lightness came to her. The oppressive burden of doubt was lifted from her soul, and she seemed to see the meaning of it all.

When such injustice was allowed to have its sway, it could only mean that the Day of Judgment was at hand, she thought. In no other way could one understand how right became wrong and why God seemed powerless to prevent evil; why the righteous must suffer persecution while wrong-doers went unrebuked.

Gertrude stood musing a moment. Yes, the coming of our Lord was surely at hand, and soon she would see Him descending from Heaven. In the light of this it was clear to her why they had been summoned to Jerusalem. By the grace of God she and her friends had been called hither to meet Jesus. She clapped her hands in an

ecstasy of joy, thinking how infinitely wonderful this was.

Then she tripped lightly up the slope to the highest point of the mountain, whence Jesus ascended into Heaven. She could not enter the enclosed part, so she stopped just outside, and looked up at the heavens, which now grew light in the sudden break of dawn.

"Perhaps He will come this very day," she thought, as she gazed at the morning sky, covered with light, fleecy clouds. Gradually these clouds became tinged with red, the brightness of which was reflected in Gertrude's face. "He is coming!" she cried. "He is surely coming!"

Watching the rosy dawn, as if seeing it for the first time, it seemed to her that she was looking right into Heaven. Away in the east she saw a deep arch with high, wide gates, which she expected to see flung wide-open so that Christ and all His angels could pass through.

And by and by the gate of the East did open, and the sun appeared.

Gertrude stood in rapt expectation while the sun shed its lustre over the mountain-region west of Jerusalem, where a range of hills arose like waves on a sea. She stood waiting until the sun had mounted so high that its rays gilded the cross on the dome of the Church of the Sepulchre.

She remembered having heard that Christ would come at dawn on the wings of the morning, and saw of course that He would not appear that day. Yet she was neither

disheartened nor anxious. "He will come tomorrow instead," she said with faith.

When Gertrude returned to the colony she was radiantly happy. She did not tell a soul of the glad expectation that filled her; the whole day she went about her work as usual and spoke only of commonplace things.

The next morning she again stood on the Mount of Olives in the early dawn. And morning after morning she was there, for she wanted to be the first to see Christ appear in the glory of the dawn.

Gertrude's wanderings soon became a subject for comment among the colonists, who begged her to desist. They told her it would harm their cause if she were seen kneeling on the Mount of Olives every morning, waiting for the Second Coming; that if she went on doing so people would soon be saying that the colonists were mad.

The girl tried to be obedient, and remain at home; but each morning, on awaking, she thought: "Jesus may come this very day." Then nothing could stop her from hastening to meet her Lord and Saviour.

This expectation had become part of herself; she could not resist it or release herself from its thrall. In other ways she was quite herself. There was nothing wrong with her brain; she was merely happier and gentler than before.

After a time the colonists took her early strolls as a matter of course, and allowed her to go without let or

hindrance. Each morning on coming out she would find a dark, shadow-like figure waiting in the archway of the gate, and on going up the mountain, she would hear behind her the clatter of iron-shod heels. She never spoke to this shadow, but she always felt so safe when she heard the firm footsteps of the one who followed her.

Sometimes, when coming down the mountain, she ran straight into Bo, as he stood leaning against a wall, waiting for her, with a look in his eyes of doglike faithfulness. Bo would blush and glance away and Gertrude would pass on as though she had not seen him.

BARAM PASHA

BARAM PASHA

THE colonists were exceedingly pleased that they had been able to rent the fine new house outside the Damascus gate, which was large enough to accommodate nearly all of them, so that only one or two families had been obliged to find quarters elsewhere. Besides, it was a pleasant abode, with its roof-terraces and open colonnades—a delightful retreat in the hot summer weather. They could not but feel they had been singularly blessed in having a house like this placed at their disposal, for it would have been impossible for them to insure comfort and keep alive the community spirit had they been obliged to live separately, in different parts of the town.

The mansion belonged to Baram Pasha, who was at that time Governor of Jerusalem. It was built for his wife, whom he loved above everything in this world. He had felt that nothing would give her greater happiness than to have a house that would hold their large family of sons and daughters-in-law, daughters and sons-in-law, the grandchildren and the retinue of servants.

But when the home was ready and Baram Pasha and his family had moved in, terrible misfortune befell him.

During the first week he lived there one of his daughters died, the second week another daughter followed, and the third week he lost his beloved wife. Then Baram Pasha, overwhelmed with grief, left his new mansion, had it shut up, and vowed never to set foot in it again.

The palace had been standing empty from that time until the Gordonites in the spring had persuaded Baram Pasha to rent it to them. Everyone was surprised at this, for they had all supposed that Baram Pasha would never allow anyone to enter his abandoned home.

But in the autumn, when the foul slander against the Gordonites had arisen, some American missionaries consulted together as to what had best be done to make these compatriots of theirs leave Jerusalem. They finally decided to go straight to Baram Pasha and tell him about his tenants. And of course they told him all the vile things that had been said of these colonists and asked him how he could allow such disreputable people to occupy the house he built for his wife.

It was a fine November morning. The long night, which had wrapped the city in its pall of darkness, had flown, and Jerusalem began to assume its usual aspect. The beggars at the Damascus gate had already taken up their accustomed places, and the stray dogs that had prowled about the whole night now went back to their dunghills and caves to rest for the day. A small caravan which had camped for the night just within the gate, was getting ready to depart. The men were binding

the bales onto the backs of the kneeling camels, that groaned under the weight of their heavy burdens. Out in the road country-folk came hurrying toward the city with huge baskets filled with garden truck. Shepherds came down from the mountains and passed solemnly under the archway, followed by large flocks of sheep, which were to be slaughtered, and herds of milch goats to be milked.

During the greatest crush at the gate, an old man came riding through on a fine white ass. The man was richly attired. He wore a tunic of fine, soft striped silk. and over it a long wide *caftan* of pale-blue brocade trimmed with fur, and his turban and his girdle were embroidered in gold. His face must once have been handsome and strong, though now his mouth was sunken, his eyes were watery, and his long white beard was scraggly and yellowed at the points.

All who thronged the gateway were astonished, and said to one another: "Why does the Baram Pasha ride through the Gate of Damascus into the road he has not wanted to look upon these three years?"

Others said: "Is the Baram Pasha riding out to his house, which he has sworn never to enter?"

As the pasha rode past the crowd at the gateway he said to the servant who accompanied him: "Dost thou mark, Machmud, that all whom we meet are surprised and say among themselves: 'What is in the air? Shall the Baram Pasha ride out to his house, which he has not visited in three years?'"

The servant answered that he had noticed that the people were surprised.

Then said Baram Pasha, with great indignation: "Do they think I am so old that people may do with me what they like? Do they think I will tolerate having these foreigners lead a life of shame in the house I built for my wife?"

Machmud, endeavouring to allay his rage, said: "Good Master, hast thou forgotten that this is not the first time thou hast heard the Christians slander each other?"

Baram Pasha then raised his arms and cried out in his anger: "Pipers and dancing-women consort together in the rooms where my loved ones died! Before the sun goes down this day these evil-doers shall be driven out from my house."

As the old pasha said that, a little band of school children came tripping down the road, two by two. He noticed that they were unlike all other children seen in the streets of Jerusalem, for they had clean hands and faces, their clothes were neat and whole and their hair was smoothly combed.

Baram Pasha stopped his donkey and said to his servant: "Go ask them who they are."

"I need not ask who they are," replied the servant, "for I see them here every day. They are the children of the Gordonites who are on their way to the school their people have established in the city in the old place where they lived before they rented thy great house."

While the pasha still sat looking after the children two men came pulling a cart, in which the smaller children sat, those who were too young to walk to school. The little ones clapped their hands for joy at the ride and the men who drew the cart laughed and ran faster to please them.

Then the servant took courage, and said: "Dost thou not see, Master, that these children must have good parents?"

But Baram Pasha, like most old people, was obstinate in his anger. "I have heard what their own countrymen say of them," he said, "and I tell thee that before nightfall they shall be turned from my house."

Farther down the road they came upon some women in European dress who were also going toward the city. They walked along quietly and sedately. Their clothes were neat, but plain, and they carried heavy, well-filled baskets.

Baram Pasha turned to his servant and bade him go ask them who they were.

The servant answered: "There is no need to ask, Master, for I meet them every day. They are women of the Gordon Colony on their way to Jerusalem with food and medicine for the sick who are not able to go out to the colony to get help."

Baram Pasha said: "Though they hide their sins under angels' wings, yet will I drive them from my house."

He rode on toward the big mansion, and when nearing it, he heard the murmur of many voices and now and

then a piercing cry. Turning to his servant, he said: "Hearest thou the noise the musicians and dancing-girls are making in my house?"

But, as he turned the corner of the street, he saw many people, sick and full of sores, sitting huddled together at the entrance gate to his house; they were talking with each other about their sufferings, and one or two moaned loudly. The servant Machmud took heart, and said:

"See, these are the musicians and dancing-girls whom thou didst hear revelling in thy house! They come here every day to consult the physicians of the Gordon Colony, and to have their sores dressed by the colony's nurses."

Baram Pasha answered: "I see that these Gordonites have bewitched thee, but I am too old to be deceived by their tricks. I tell thee, if I had the power, I would hang every one of them from the eaves-course round my house." He was still in a ferment of anger when he dismounted and went up the steps.

As the old pasha entered the courtyard, a tall, stately woman bowed to him. Although her hair was white, the woman did not appear to be more than forty years old. Her face expressed rare intelligence and authority, and though she was simply attired, in a plain black gown, one could see that she was accustomed to rule over many people.

Baram Pasha now turned to Machmud and said to him: "This woman looks as good and as wise as Kadid-

scha, the wife of the Prophet. What is she doing in this house?"

And Machmud, his servant, answered: "It is Mrs. Gordon, who has been at the head of the colony since the death of her husband in the spring."

Then the old man's anger rose again, and in a hard voice he bade Machmud tell her he had come to turn her and her people out of his house.

But the servant said to him: "Shall the just Baram Pasha drive these Christians out merely because he has heard their brethren vilify them? Master, would it not be better to say to this woman, 'I have come hither to inspect my house'? Shouldst thou find that they lead the sort of life the missionaries say they do, then tell her that she and those with her must leave this place, that no abomination will be tolerated in the house where thy dear ones have lived."

Then said Baram Pasha: "Tell her that I would inspect my house."

Machmud interpreted this to Mrs. Gordon, and she replied:

"It will be a pleasure to us to show Baram Pasha how we have fitted up his fine mansion."

Mrs. Gordon sent for Miss Young, who had lived in Jerusalem from childhood and spoke Arabic like a native, and asked her to conduct the pasha through the building.

Baram Pasha took the arm of his servant and followed her. As he wished to see the whole house, Miss Young first took him into the basement, to the laundry, and

proudly showed him the huge piles of freshly-laundered linen, the big boilers and the busy workers at their wash-tubs and ironing-boards.

Then Miss Young conducted Baram Pasha into the adjoining room, which was the bakery. "See," she said, "what a splendid oven our brothers have built for us, and what excellent bread we ourselves make."

From there they went to the carpenter-shop, where a couple of old men were at work. Miss Young showed Baram Pasha some plain chairs and tables made by them.

"Oh, Machmud, I fear these people are too deep for me!" the old pasha said in Turkish, which he supposed Miss Young would not understand. "They must have been warned by their spies, and were prepared for my visit. I had expected to find them drinking wine and throwing dice. And now I see them all at work."

Thereupon they went through the kitchen and the sewing-room and presently came to another room, the door of which was opened with a certain ceremony. It was the weaving-room, where looms clattered and spinning wheels and carders were in full swing.

Again Baram Pasha's servant took courage, and called his master's attention to the firm, strong cloth they were making here. "Excellency," said he, "these are no flimsy fabrics for dancing-girls or airy garments for frivolous women."

Baram Pasha made no response. Wherever he looked he saw only persons with earnest, thoughtful faces intent

upon their work. But instantly he entered a room a smile lighted up the faces of these serious toilers.

"I am telling them," Miss Young explained, "that you are the good Governor who allows us to occupy this beautiful house, and they wish me to thank you for your kindness to us."

All the while Baram Pasha had a stern, hard look on his face. As he did not respond, Miss Young began to feel uneasy, and said to herself: "Why does he not speak to me? Can he have turned against us?"

She conducted the pasha through the long, narrow dining rooms, where they were clearing the tables and washing the breakfast dishes. Here, too, he saw only strict orderliness and simplicity.

His servant Machmud once more took courage, and said to him: "Master, how should it be possible for these people who toil all day, who bake their own bread and make their own clothes, to transform themselves at night into pipers and dancers?"

Baram Pasha could not answer him. He continued his tour of inspection, determined to see every part of his house. He went into the large dormitory of the unmarried men, with its rows of plain beds all made, then into the various family apartments, where parents and children could be together. In all these rooms he saw well-scoured floors, light wood furniture, with coverings of checked cotton, white bed-hangings and home-woven floor-mats.

Baram Pasha looked only the more displeased. He

said to Machmud: "These Christians are far too wary for me. They know only too well how to cover up their sinful lives. I expected to see the floors strewn with cigar ashes and fruit parings, and to find the women sitting gossiping, while they smoked their narghiles or tinted their nails."

Finally he ascended the beautiful white marble staircase to the meeting-hall, which had once been the pasha's reception-room, and which was now furnished in the American fashion, with comfortable chairs round the tables, on which were books and periodicals, a piano, and an organ, and here and there on the light-painted walls hung a photograph.

Here they were again received by Mrs. Gordon. Now the Baram Pasha said to his servant: "Tell her that before night she and her followers must leave this house."

Machmud the servant replied: "Master, one of these women can speak thy native language. Let her hear from thine own lips what is thy will."

Baram Pasha then raised his eyes to Miss Young, who met his gaze with a sweet smile. Turning to his servant, he said: "I have never beheld a face dowered by the Almighty with greater purity and beauty. I dare not tell her I have heard that her people have fallen into sin and wantonness."

Baram Pasha sank down on a chair and covered his face with his hands, while he tried to make out which was true—what he had heard or what he had seen.

Just then the door opened softly and into the room

came a poor old pilgrim in a shabby gray mantle, his legs swathed with rags. On his head was a soiled turban, the green colour of which denoted that he was a descendant of Mohammed.

Taking no notice of the pasha, the man went and sat down on a chair a little apart from the others.

"Who is that man, and what does he here?" asked Baram Pasha, turning to Miss Young.

"We do not know him," Miss Young replied. "He has never been here before. You must not mind his coming in. Our house stands open to any and everyone who wishes to take refuge here."

"Machmud," said the pasha to his servant, "go ask this descendant of the Prophet what he seeks here among these Christians?"

In a moment the servant came back to the pasha: "He says that he seeks nothing here, but he would not pass by this house without coming in, because it is written: 'Commit not the sin of letting thy feet stray past the dwelling of the righteous.'"

For a long time Baram Pasha was silent. Presently he said to his servant: "Thou canst not have heard aright, Machmud. Go, ask him again what he wants in this house."

Machmud did as he was told and again came back with the same answer, which he repeated word for word.

"Let us thank God, friend Machmud," said Baram Pasha humbly, "for He hath sent this man to enlighten us. He hath guided his footsteps hither that mine eyes

might be opened to the truth. We ride back now, friend Machmud. I shall not turn these good Christians out of their home."

Shortly afterwards Baram Pasha and his servant rode away from the colony; but within an hour Machmud came back, leading his master's beautiful white donkey, which he presented to the colonists with the compliments of Baram Pasha, who hoped they would use it to draw the little children to school.

"FLOWERS FROM PALESTINE"

"FLOWERS FROM PALESTINE"

IT WAS near the end of February. The winter rains were over and spring had come. As yet it was not very far advanced. The buds on the fig trees had not begun to swell and the grape leaves had not come creeping out from their dark-brown vines, nor had the orange-blossoms opened.

But what had dared to come out at this early season were the little field flowers. All the meadows were spread with pinks and daisies and every copse was thick with crocuses and pasque-flowers; large, fiery-red anemones covered the rocky slopes and upon every ledge violets and cyclamen blossomed.

As in other countries one goes berrying, so in Palestine one goes flower gathering. From all the convents and mission-stations they go out to pick flowers. Poor members of the Jewish colony, European tourists and Syrian laborers can be seen every day down in the wild rocky dells carrying flower baskets. At evening these gatherers return to the city laden with anemones and hyacinths, with violets and tulips, with narcissi and orchids.

In the courtyards of the many hospices and cloisters of the Holy City stand large stone basins filled with

water, in which the flowers are placed, and in rooms and cells busy hands spread the flowers out on large sheets of paper and press them.

When the little meadow pinks, anemones and hyacinths are well flattened and dried, they are made up into smaller and larger bouquets—some prettily arranged, some not—and pasted on cards and in small albums with covers of olive wood, upon which have been burnt: "Flowers from Palestine."

And then all these flowers from Zion, from Hebron, from the Mount of Olives, from Jericho, go out into the wide world. They are sold in shops, they are sent in letters, are given away as keepsakes or in exchange for gifts of charity. Farther than India's pearls and silks from Brussa do these little field blossoms travel; they are the only things the poor Holy Land is rich in.

One fine spring morning the whole Gordon Colony was making ready to go flower gathering. The children, who had been granted a day's leave from school, ran about, wild with glee, begging every one to lend them baskets to put flowers in. The women had been up since four in the morning preparing a luncheon for the outing and up to the last moment they were busy in the kitchen making patties and opening preserve jars. Some of the men were packing sandwiches and milk-bottles, bread and cheese into their botony-tins; others took charge of the water-bottles and tea-kitchens. The children gathered at the gate and the instant it was

opened rushed out, followed by large and small groups of their elders. As no one remained at home, the big house was soon quite empty of people.

Bo Ingmar Mansson was very happy that day. He had arranged to walk with Gertrude, so that he might help her with all the things she had to carry. Gertrude's kerchief was drawn so far down over her forehead that all Bo could see of her face was the chin and a soft fair cheek. He smiled at the thought of his being so pleased just to be allowed to walk with Gertrude, when he could neither look into her face nor speak with her. Directly behind them were Karin and her sisters; they struck up a hymn they had often sung with their mother back at the Ingmar Farm, when sitting at their spinning-wheels in the early morning hours. Bo remembered the old hymn:

"The blessed day we now behold
From Heaven to us descending——"

In front of Bo and Gertrude walked old Corporal Felt, with all the children around him clinging to his cane and tugging at his coat tails. Bo remembering the time when every youngster took to his heels at the mere sight of the man, thought to himself: "I've never seen the old corporal look so sturdy and important; he fairly bristles with pride because the children love to be with him."

Presently Bo descried Helgum going along quietly holding his wife by one hand and his pretty little daugh-

ter by the other. "It's strange about Helgum," he mused. "He seems to have sunk into obscurity since we joined these Americans; which was to be expected, for they are superior people who have a wonderful gift for expounding the Word of God. I should really like to know how it affects him not to be the centre of a worshipping throng on an occasion like this. At all events, his wife seems glad that she can have him more to herself nowadays. It is evident from her manner and bearing that she has never in her life been so proud and happy."

At the very front walked beautiful Miss Young and an English youth, who had been in the colony about two years. Bo knew, as did every one else, that the Englishman was in love with Miss Young and had come among them in the hope of making her his wife. There was no doubt either, that the girl was fond of him; but of course the Gordonites could not relax their stringent rules in her case any more than in that of others, and thus the two had gone on living at the colony, hoping against hope. To-day they walked side by side, and spoke only to each other. They had neither eyes nor ears for any one else.

There was a French sailor in the colony who had been there from its inception, and who was now very old and feeble. He and Gabriel came last. Bo noticed that Gabriel had given the sailor his arm and was helping him over the many steep places. "It is the thought of his old father makes Gabriel do that," Bo said to himself.

Their road at first went toward the east, through a

lonely and bare mountain region where there were no flowers. The rains had washed away all the soil, leaving only the barren yellowish rock.

"Never have I seen so blue a sky as the one above these yellow hills," thought Bo, "which, despite their barrenness, are not ugly; they are so smooth and prettily rounded—just like the big domes and cupolas of the churches and homes in this land."

When the colonists had been tramping for about an hour, they sighted the first rocky dell, covered with red anemones. Laughing and shouting, they hurried down the mountain-side and eagerly went to picking flowers. By-and-by they came to another dell, which was full of violets, then to another, where all kinds of spring flowers grew.

The Swedes at first were almost too eager; they tore up the flowers regardlessly, until the Americans showed them how to go about it. They were to pick and choose only such flowers as were suitable for pressing, which was something of a task.

Gertrude and Bo walked side by side gathering flowers. Once when Bo straightened his back to rest for a moment, he saw a couple of stalwart yeoman from his homeland who for many years had never so much as glanced at a flower, plucking away as eagerly as the others. He could hardly keep from laughing. Suddenly he turned and said to Gertrude:

"I am pondering what Jesus meant when he said: 'Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.'"

Gertrude looked at Bo in surprise. It was so unusual for him to address a remark to her. "They are strange words," she replied.

"I have observed," said Bo, thoughtfully, "that children are never so good as when they play at being grown up. It's great fun to watch them plowing a field they have staked out in the middle of the road and flourishing their whips made of string over imaginary horses while digging furrows in the road-sand with a pine-twig. They are such amusing little beggars as they walk along talking to themselves—wondering whether they will be finished with their sowing before their neighbors, or complaining that they have never worked a field so hard to plow."

Gertrude, bending over the flowers, went on plucking. She could not imagine to what he was leading.

"I remember," Bo continued, "what fun I had when I built a barn of wooden blocks and put pine-cones in it for cows. I was always most particular to give the cows new-mown hay every morning and evening and sometimes I would pretend it was spring, and time to drive my live-stock to the *säter*. Then I would blow my horn and call so loudly for *Star* and *Gold-lily* that I could be heard all over the farm. I used to tell my mother just how much milk my cows gave and the price I expected to get at the dairy for my butter. I also took care to place a board over the eyes of my bull, and when people went by I would shout, 'Beware! this bull is vicious.'"

Now Gertrude was more interested in what Bo was saying than in gathering flowers, for he seemed to have

the sort of thoughts and fancies that once filled her own brain.

"But the best sport of all," he went on, "was when we boys played at being men, and held a town council. I remember how I and my brothers and two or three other boys used to sit perched on a pile of boards in our yard, the one who was chairman rapped on the boards with a wooden-ladle for order, and the rest of us sat solemnly on either side of him, and determined who was to receive aid from the parish and what this or that one should pay in taxes. We sat with our thumbs thrust into the armholes of our waistcoats and spoke in thick voices, as if our mouths were full of mush, and we always addressed one another as Mr. Chairman, Sexton, Churchwarden, Schoolmaster and Judge."

Bo paused a moment and kneaded his brow, as if he had now come to that which he wanted to say. Gertrude had quit plucking flowers and was sitting on the ground, her kerchief pushed back. She glanced at him, expecting to hear something new and startling.

"Since it is a good thing for children to play they are grown folk," he continued, "it may also be good for grown-ups to play they are children once in a while. When I see these old men, who at this season have always been accustomed to work in the wild forest, cutting and hauling timber, going here intent upon such child's play as picking flowers, it seems to me that we are following Jesus' admonition to be as little children."

Gertrude's eyes beamed; she knew now what he

meant, and the thought pleased her. "I think we have all been transformed into children since coming here," she said.

"Yes," laughed Bo, "we have been like children in this, that we had to be taught all sorts of things. We've had to learn how to hold our forks and spoons and to like certain foods we had never before tasted. And at first we were not allowed to go anywhere unless some of them went along, for fear we'd lose our way, and we were warned against people who might do us harm, and against certain places where we must not go."

"We Swedes were exactly like babies learning to talk," said Gertrude; "we had to be taught to say table, and chair, and cupboard, and before long I suppose we shall be back at the school-bench again, learning to read this new language."

Now they both became very eager to find fresh instances of similarity.

"I've had to learn the names of the different trees, just as my mother taught me when I was a lad. I have learned to tell the knotted fig-tree from the twisted olive-tree. And I have also learned to know a Turk by his short jacket, a Bedouin by his striped mantle, a dervish by his felt cap, and a Jew by the little corkscrew curls at his ears."

"Yes, it is quite the same as when we, in our childhood, learned to know the Floda peasants and the Gagnef peasants by their hats and coats."

"Could anything be more childlike than our letting

others do everything for us?" laughed Bo. "We have no money of our own and if we want a penny to spend, we must ask for it. Every time a fruit-vender offers me an orange or a bunch of grapes, I feel as I felt in my boyhood, when I was obliged to go past the candy-stand at the county fair because I hadn't a copper in my pocket."

"I verily believe we have been completely transformed," said Gertrude. "If we went back to Sweden, I'm sure our people would hardly know us."

"How can we help thinking that we have become children," Bo rejoined, "when we must dig in a potato patch the size of a barn floor, and then plow it with an implement made from the limb of a tree, and have only a little donkey for a horse? Instead of having real farms to work, we play a bit at vine-growing."

Bo closed his eyes so that he could think with less effort. It suddenly struck Gertrude that he had become wonderfully like Ingmar Ingmarsson. His whole face reflected wisdom and thoughtfulness.

"However, all this is immaterial," said Bo. "The vital thing is that our attitude toward life and our fellow beings has become childlike, we think everyone wishes us well, and that despite the fact that some people are very hard upon us."

"Yes, it must have been more the state of mind Christ was thinking of when he spoke those words," Gertrude observed.

"Our minds have certainly been remoulded," said Bo.

"Haven't you noticed that now, when vexations come, we do not brood over them for days and weeks, but forget all about them in a little while?"

Just then someone called to them to come to breakfast. Bo frowned; he could have walked and talked with Gertrude the whole day without thought of food. He had been so blissfully content all the morning that he was beginning to feel the colonists were right in saying that people need only live in peace and concord, as they did, to be happy. "I'm quite satisfied with things as they are," he mused. "Much as I think of Gertrude, I no longer desire to marry her. All that agonizing love-sickness that kept me in a state of torment in times gone by has left me. Now, I'm quite satisfied and happy if I can only see her every day and serve her."

Bo would have liked to tell Gertrude that he was completely changed and felt quite like a child in every way; but he was too bashful; he could not find the right words. And all the way home he kept thinking to himself that he really ought to tell Gertrude about his altered feelings, so that she would be more at ease in his company and rely upon him as upon a brother.

They got back to the colony at sunset. Bo sat down under an old sycamore tree outside the gate. He wanted to remain out of doors as long as possible. When the others had all gone in, Gertrude asked him if he too would not come.

"I'm sitting here thinking of what we talked about this morning," said Bo. "And I am wondering what

would happen if Jesus were to pass this way, as He no doubt often did when on earth, and come and sit under this very tree, and say: 'Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of God.'" There was a note of dreaminess in Bo's voice; it was as if he were thinking aloud, and Gertrude stood quietly listening.

Then, in a moment, he continued: "I should answer Him and say: 'Lord, we help one another without asking anything in return, as do children, and if we get angry at a brother, it is not for long; we're friends again before night. Dost thou not see, Lord, that we are altogether as children?'"

"And what do you think Jesus would answer?" asked Gertrude tenderly.

"He would sit quite still and again say, 'Ye must be as children if ye would enter into My Kingdom.' And I should say to him, just as I said before: 'Lord, we love everyone as children love. We do not discriminate between Jew and Armenian, between Turk and Bedouin, between black and white. We love the wise and the simple, high and low, and share our goods with Christians and Mohammedans alike. So is it not true, Lord, that we are as children and may enter Thy Kingdom?'"

"What would Jesus answer to that?"

"Nothing. He would just sit there and tenderly repeat: 'Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter My Kingdom.' Now I know what He means, and I say to Him: 'Lord, even in this am I become as a child, that I no longer feel the sort of love I once felt, but my be-

loved is to me as a playmate, a dear sister, with whom I can wander in the green fields and pick flowers. Then, Lord, am I not——?'"

Bo suddenly broke off, for he knew the instant these words were uttered that he was lying. It was to him as if Jesus were actually there looking into his very soul and could see how his love rose within him, tearing at his heart like some beast of prey because he would deny its existence in the presence of his beloved.

He buried his face in his hands and groaned: "No, Lord, I am not as a little child; I cannot enter Thy Kingdom. Perhaps the others can, but I cannot quench the fire in my soul and deaden the life in my body. Yet if it be Thy will, Lord, I shall let this fire consume me without seeking solace for my longings."

Bo sat long under the tree, weeping, overcome by his love. When he at length looked up, Gertrude was gone; she had slipped away so quietly he had not heard her go.

GEHENNA

GEHENNA

OUTSIDE the walls of Jerusalem, on the southern slope of Mount Zion, one of the American missionary societies had a cemetery, in which the Gordonites had obtained permission to bury their dead. Already many of their people rested there, from Jacques Garnier, who had been a cabin-boy on the steamship *L'Univers* and who was the first among the colonists to pass away, to Edward Gordon himself, who died in the spring, soon after his return from America.

It was the poorest and plainest burial place imaginable—only a small piece of ground surrounded by a wall so high and thick it might have served as a fortification. There was not a tree nor a blade of grass in the place, but the ground was fairly well kept. Over the mounds were flat slabs of limestone, of which there is a plentiful supply in Jerusalem and at the side of some graves were green chairs and benches.

Down in the eastern corner, where one could have a fine view of the Dead Sea and the shining hills of Moab but for the wall, were the graves of the Swedish colonists. So many of them lay buried there that it almost seemed as if our Lord had found that they had done enough for Him in giving up their homes, and allowed them to enter

His Kingdom without requiring further sacrifices. Here lay Birger Larsson, the smith, and Ljung Björn's little son Eric and Gunhild and Brita Ingmarsson, who died soon after that happy day when the colonists had gone flower gathering. Here, too, rested Per Gunnarsson and Martha Eskilsson, who had been members of Helgum's community in America. Death the Reaper had gathered in so many of these people that the situation was becoming embarrassing to the colonists, who felt they had already taken up too much ground in this crowded churchyard.

Tims Halvor had buried one of his children there, a little girl who was only three years old when she was taken from him. He had been passionately fond of her, and of all his children she was the most like him. Never had he felt toward any other being what he felt toward that child. Go where he would, do what he would, his thoughts were always with her.

Had she died at home in Dalecarlia and been buried in the parish churchyard, then perhaps it would have gone less hard with him; but now he always had the feeling that his little girl must be very lonely and unhappy out there in that dreadful cemetery. At night he seemed to see her sitting upon her little grave shivering in the cold, and crying that she was afraid in this strange dark place.

One afternoon Halvor went down to the Valley of Johoshaphat and gathered a lot of red anemones, the brightest and prettiest he could find, to place on her

grave. As he walked along the green meadows he thought: "If I only had my little girl here in this open place, under a grassy mound, where she would not be shut in by that awful wall!" He had always hated the high wall round the cemetery; the very thought of it made him feel as though he had locked the poor little thing up in a cold dark house, with no one to care for her. "I'm so cold and miserable, father," he seemed to hear her moan.

Coming up from the valley, he went along the narrow path outside the city wall toward the hill of Zion. The burying-ground lay a little to the west of the Gate of Zion, just below the big garden of the Armenians. And all the while he was thinking of his child.

Suddenly he had a feeling that something here was not as usual. Glancing up, he saw some men pulling down a wall, and stopped to watch them. What were they demolishing? Was it a building or a stone hedge? It must be over by the cemetery, or had he missed his way?

It was some moments before he realized what was happening. It was the high wall round the cemetery the workmen were pulling down.

Halvor tried to persuade himself it was being razed in order to extend the cemetery or perhaps to put up iron railing. "It won't be so cold and damp in there with the wall away," thought he. Then, all at once a terrible fear came over him, and he began to run: "I hope to God they haven't disturbed her grave! She

lies just under the wall. I only hope they've done nothing to her!"

He was quite out of breath as he clambered over the heaps of stones into the graveyard. He saw now what had happened there and felt at the same time that something had happened to his heart; it suddenly stopped, then beat violently, whereupon it stopped again. It acted like the works of a worn-out clock.

Halvor was obliged to sit down on a stone until he could recover himself. By degrees his heart-beats became more regular, though still heavy and labored. "I'm not dead yet," he said to himself. "I shall probably go on living a while longer."

Presently he got up and looked round the cemetery. On the ground lay some bones and skulls that must have fallen out of old coffins. All the gravestones had been piled in a corner.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "what have they done with the dead?" He went up to the workmen and asked them in Swedish what they had done with little Greta—too dazed and appalled to know what he said or did.

Then it struck him that he was speaking his native tongue. Bewildered, he put his hand to his head in an effort to pull himself together and remember who and what he was; that he was no timorous child, but a sensible man of years, that he had been a big farmer to whom all the parish had once looked up. It would never do for a man like him to lose his wits, he thought.

Halvor then asked in English why the cemetery had been torn up.

The workmen were natives, but one, who knew a little English, informed him that the American missionaries had sold the ground to some Germans, who were going to build a hospital there, and that was why they had to dig up the dead.

Halvor stood pondering the man's reply. So they were going to put up a hospital here! With all these barren hills, it seemed strange that they could not have found another spot for it, but must build just here. What if the dead whom they had turned out of their graves should come knocking at the door of the hospital and beg to be let in? "We, too, want a bed here," they would say, and there would be a long line of them standing there, with Birger Larsson, Gunhild, Baby Eric and the rest—last of all his little girl.

He choked back the rising sobs, trying all the while to appear unconcerned. He stood swinging his bouquet of red anemones in a posture of assumed indifference. "But what has been done with the dead?" he asked.

"The Americans have taken away their coffins," replied the workman. "All who had any dead lying here were notified to come and remove them." The man stopped short and looked at Halvor. "Perhaps you come from the big house outside the Damascus gate? The people living there have not removed a single body."

"No word of this has reached us," said Halvor, still twirling his bouquet, though his face was tense with the struggle to hide his feelings from these strangers.

"The ones that have not been taken away are lying over yonder," said the man, pointing toward a spot farther down the hill. "I'll show you the place so that your people can come and bury them."

The man led the way, and Halvor followed, picking up a stone as he stepped over the remnants of the wall. Walking close behind his guide, Halvor said in Swedish: "I should think the man would be afraid of me, and keep at a safe distance? He helped to cast her out; he threw my little Greta on a rubbish-heap. My little Greta, who should have had a marble tomb to rest in, was not even allowed to lie in peace in her wretched grave! Perhaps it was this very man who dug her out," muttered Halvor, balancing the stone in his hand. "I'm tempted to smash that shaven pate under the red fez! I'll have you know," he said, as if addressing his guide, "that that child was little Greta of Ingmar Farm, who by rights should be resting beside Big Ingmar. She came of good people and should have been allowed to lie undisturbed in her own little grave till the end of Time. Here they had not even a funeral feast for her and the bells did not toll when she was carried to the churchyard, and there was no regularly ordained pastor to read the Burial-service. But for all that, what right had you to turn her out of her grave? Even if I did not prove a good father to her in those matters, understand

I'm not such a wretch as to condone your crime of turning her out of her grave."

Halvor raised his hand to hurl the stone, when the workman suddenly turned to him and said: "Here they are."

In the midst of refuse-heaps and ruins was a deep pit into which the plain coffins of the colonists had been carelessly thrown. Some old coffins had fallen apart and the bodies inside were exposed to view. Others had been placed on end and through their worm-eaten lids protruded long withered hands that seemed to be trying to turn their coffins into proper position.

As Halvor stood looking down upon all this the workman happened to notice his hand, which was clenched about the stone so tightly that the finger-tips had turned white, then he glanced at Halvor's face, in which he must have read something dreadful, for with a cry of terror he turned and fled.

But Halvor, completely unnerved by the sight he beheld, no longer thought of the man. Most dreadful of all was the sickening stench of decaying bodies that filled the air. A pair of vultures hovered above the pit waiting for the cover of darkness, to swoop down upon the carrion. Some tramp dogs that had come running sat upon their haunches at the edge of the deep grave looking down, their tongues lolling far out of their jaws.

Then, to his horror, Halvor discovered that he was on the slope leading to the Valley of Hinnom and close to the place where once burned the fires of Gehenna.

"This is indeed Gehenna!" he exclaimed—"the abode of terror."

He did not stand long looking toward Gehenna, but instantly jumped into the pit, pushed the heavy coffins to right and left, crawling in among the dead, searching for his little Greta. When he at length found her coffin, he lifted it onto his shoulder and climbed out of the pit.

"She will never have to say of her father that he let her stay the night in this horrible place. My precious child," he crooned to the dead, "we didn't know of this. None of us knew you were to be turned out of your graves. Others were told what was to happen, but not we. They think us of no account, that's why they haven't troubled to let us know about it."

Now his heart hurt him again; so he had to sit down until the pain was gone. "Don't be uneasy, little one," he said, "this will soon pass. Have no fear, for father is strong enough to carry his little girl away from this place."

In a while he felt better, and, taking up the coffin, he went on toward Jerusalem. As he walked along the narrow path outside the city wall, it seemed to him as if everything were changed. The sight of the walls and the ruins frightened him. To his mind they had become singularly hostile and menacing. It was as if this strange country and this strange city mocked at him.

"My child," he continued, "you mustn't be angry at father for bringing you to this cruel land. If a thing

like this had happened at home, the forests would have wept and the stones would have cried out, but this is a pitiless land."

Halvor had to proceed very slowly on account of his heart; its action was too faint to drive the blood through his veins. He felt so weak and helpless. A wave of despair swept over him at the thought of being so far away in a foreign land, where no one would have compassion on him. Then, turning the corner, he tramped on outside the eastern wall, below which lay the grave-strewn Valley of Jehoshaphat.

"It is here the Last Judging will be held, when the dead arise," he mused. "What will God say to me on Doomsday for bringing my dear ones to this city of death, and persuading relatives and friends to come to this dreadful place? They will accuse me before God!" He seemed to hear his countrymen raising their voices against him: "We believed in him, and he took us to a land where we are more despised than dogs; to a city whose cruelty has killed us."

He tried to shake off these morbid thoughts, but could not; he seemed to see all the perils and hardships that lay before his comrades—the dire poverty that must inevitably overtake them, as they would not take pay for their work. He thought of the trying climate, of the sickness that would come upon them; of the strict rules they had laid upon themselves, which must eventually bring about dissension and ruin. He felt weary unto death.

"We can no more go on living in this wretched land than we can till its soil or drink its water," he groaned. Now he was so weak that he could hardly drag himself along.

As the colonists sat at their evening meal they heard a faint ring at the gate.

Tims Halvor, more dead than alive, was found sitting on the ground outside. Beside him was his little girl's coffin. He sat pulling out flowers from a large bouquet of faded anemones and strewing them over the coffin.

Ljung Björn, who opened the gate, noticed that Halvor was trying to say something, and bent down to catch the words.

"They have thrown our dead out of their graves," Halvor mumbled, "they are lying under the open sky down in Gehenna. You must go this very night and fetch them."

"What are you saying?" gasped Björn, who did not understand what Halvor meant.

The dying man with extreme effort rose to his feet. "They have turned our dead our of their graves, Björn. All you men must go to Gehenna tonight and take them away." When this was said, he fell back with a groan. "I'm sick, Björn. There's something wrong with my heart. I was afraid I might die before I could tell you of this. I carried little Greta home, but I had to leave the others."

Björn knelt down to lift Halvor. "Come, let me help you in," he said, but Halvor did not hear him.

"Promise me, Björn, that little Greta shall be properly buried. I don't want her to think she has a bad father."

"Yes, I promise," said Björn; "but won't you try to come in now?"

Halvor's head sank low. "See that she is laid to rest under a green mound," he whispered. "And lay me, too, under a green mound."

Björn, seeing how ill Halvor was, hurried back to the house for help, but when he returned Halvor was dead.

THE WELL OF PARADISE

THE WELL OF PARADISE

IT WAS a trying summer in Jerusalem, with drouth and much sickness. The winter rains had been very light that year and the Holy City, which is dependent upon them for its water supply, that collects in the underground cisterns during the winter months, was nearly out of water. When people had to resort to the muddy, ill-smelling mixture at the bottom of these cisterns sickness increased at an alarming rate. There was hardly a house where some one had not been taken down with typhoid, smallpox or climatic fever.

The Gordon colonists had a busy time of it, as nearly all of them were attending to the sick. Those who had lived for some years in Jerusalem seemed to be immune to infection, and could go from patient to patient without endangering their own health. The Swedish-Americans, who had weathered hot summers in Chicago, were also able to withstand sickness and fatigue. But the poor peasants from Dalecarlia nearly all fell ill.

At first they thought there was nothing much the matter with them. They were up and about, but unable to work, and although they suffered continually from fever and were growing thin, none of them believed it was anything more than a passing indisposition. The

first week the widow of Berger Persson died, and shortly afterwards one of her sons. In the meantime more of the peasants were taken ill; it looked as if all the Dalecarlians would soon be wiped out.

The sick people craved for but one thing; they begged all the while for water—for just a mouthful of pure fresh water. They said it was the only medicine they needed to make them well again.

Then if one offered them cistern water they turned away and would not taste it. Although the water had been filtered and cooled they fancied it had a musty smell and an acrid taste. A few who tried to drink of it were seized with violent pains, and imagined they had been poisoned.

One morning, when this epidemic was at its worst, some of the men were sitting in the shadow of the house talking together. Their hollow cheeks and dull, bloodshot eyes told plainly that they were fever victims.

They sat with idle hands gazing at the clear blue sky, and not even the smallest cloud that appeared on the horizon escaped their notice. They knew well that no rain was expected for several months, but instantly a filmy cloud was seen, they looked for a miracle in the guise of rain. "Perhaps God will soon send us relief," they thought.

While following with their eyes a growing cloudlet in its passage across the sky they talked of how it would seem to hear big drops beating against the walls and windows, and to see water gushing from the rain-pipes,

flushing the road and carrying with it pebbles and sand. They determined not to seek shelter from the shower, should it come, but to sit still and let the rain pour down upon them. They felt that they, like the dry soil, needed to be soaked through.

As the cloud rose higher it grew smaller and seemed to fade away. First the fleecy edges disappeared, then the cloud itself broke at the centre, separating into faint lines, that soon vanished entirely.

When the peasants could no longer see the cloud they were in despair. The older men, enfeebled by illness, put their hands over their eyes, so that if they could not keep back the rising tears no one would see them weep.

Ljung Björn Olafsson, who, since the death of Tims Halvor, had become the leading spirit among the Swedes, tried to hearten the others. He talked to them about the brook of Kedron that in olden times flowed through the Valley of Jehoshaphat and gave to Jerusalem an abundant water supply. Taking his Bible from his pocket, he read all the passages where there was any mention of the brook of Kedron, picturing to them what a big and mighty stream it had been; how in summer it had turned mill-wheels and in winter overflowed its banks and watered the whole country-side.

It was evident that Ljung Björn derived comfort from telling about the great stream that once flowed past Jerusalem, for it was always in his thoughts. He dwelt particularly upon that chapter which tells of David

wading across the brook of Kedron when fleeing from Absalom and he described how it would feel to walk with bare feet in cool, running water. "To me that would be almost better than drinking it," he said.

Ljung Björn was still talking about Kedron, when his brother-in-law, Bullet Gunner, cut him short. Gunner declared that he did not care to hear about an old brook long since dried up. All through this time of sore trial he had been pondering a prophecy of Ezekiel. It was about a river that would issue from the threshold of the temple and flow over the dry plain as far as the Dead Sea. As he talked his eyes gleamed and he shook back his black forelock, that kept falling over his eyes. He spoke in a way that made the peasants see the waters come flowing down from Jerusalem; they glided on, softly rippling over the stones of the many little creeks in the green meadows. On the banks grew poplars and willows and thick-leaved succulent plants hung down over the surface of the water, which glistened and purled as it flowed over the white stones at the bottom.

"And this must come to pass," cried Gunner fervently. "It is a promise from God which has not yet been fulfilled. I've been thinking that perhaps the fulfillment may come today, or tomorrow."

Whereupon Gabriel, who was also there, became eagerly interested. He borrowed Ljung Björn's Bible and read aloud some verses from the Book of Chronicles. "Listen to this," he said; "it is the most remarkable thing I have ever heard." And then he read how in the days

of Hezekiah there came word that Sennacherib, with all his hosts, was approaching to besiege Jerusalem, and how Hezekiah took council with his princes and his mighty men, and how they all said it would not be well if the Assyrians should find much water here when they came to besiege the city. Then Hezekiah with his hosts went forth and stopped the waters outside Jerusalem, both the great brook that ran through the midst of the land and all the fountains.

When he had finished he looked out at the barren fields around the colony. "I have been pondering this narrative a long while," he said, "and have asked the Americans about it. Now I'm going to tell you what I've learned."

Gabriel spoke with ease and fluency, just as his father. Hök Matts, spoke when the spirit moved him to preach, Ordinarily Gabriel was no speaker, but now, with the fever raging in his veins, the words flowed freely from his lips.

"The Americans told me that in the reign of King Hezekiah this mountain plain was covered with trees and bushes. No corn grew in the stony soil, but there were many gardens here, gardens full of pomegranates and apricot trees, of saffron and cinnamon and calmus trees, of kofer shrubs and nardus plants—of every kind of choice fruit and fragrant herb. All these trees and plants were well watered; from rivers and brooks water flowed into every garden, and each day at a given hour the owners were allowed to flood their gardens.

"One morning, when all the trees were in richest bloom, Hezekiah, with his men, went forth from the city. As he passed through the gardens the almond and apricot trees showered their blossoms upon him. The air was heavy with sweet fragrances when Hezekiah went forth, and when he returned, at the close of the day, the trees again saluted him with their balmy sweetness.

"But that day King Hezekiah had stopped all the fountains of Jerusalem and the great brook that flowed through the midst of the land. The next day there was no water in the little creeks which had fed the roots of the trees. Some weeks later, when the trees should have borne fruit, they had no vitality, and put forth but little; and when the leaves sprang out they were small and shriveled.

"After that evil times came upon Jerusalem—wars and dire calamities. There was no time to open the fountains again and lead the great stream back to its bed. So the fruit trees on the hillsides surrounding the city died, some in the first summer drouth, others in the second, and the few remaining ones in the third. The land round about Jerusalem became a barren waste, as it is to this day."

Gabriel picked up a flint and began to bore the ground with it. "But it happened," he continued, "that the Jews on their return from Babylon could not find the place where the brook had been, nor could they find the choked fountain-springs. Not in all this time has anyone been able to locate them.

"But we who sit here pining for water, why cannot we look for Hezekiah's fountains? Why do not we search for the great brook and all the springs? Could we but find them, trees would again grow on these rocky slopes and this land would become rich and fruitful. It would be far better than finding gold."

When Gabriel had finished speaking the others pondered his words; they conceded that it might be as he had said—that the great brook could perhaps be found; but no one made a move to begin the search, not even Gabriel himself. It was plain that he had only talked to quiet his longings.

Then Bo Ingmar Mansson, who had sat silent the whole time listening to the others, spoke. He did not have the fever, but no one was more anxious to find fresh water than he; for Gertrude, too, had fallen ill, and lay craving for water. So he, like the others, could think of nothing but fountains and streams.

"My thoughts are not upon such sacred and wonderful waters as yours," said Bo quietly, "but from morning to night I dream of a shining river whose waters run clear, and fresh, and pure."

The peasants looked up in eager suspense.

"I'm thinking of a stream, fed by many brooks and creeks, whose waters flow down from the dark forest so clear and transparent that one can see all the glittering pebble-stones that form its bed. And that stream is not dried up like Kedron, nor is it a mere phantasy, like the river of Ezekiel, nor impossible to find, like Heze-

kiah's brook, but it flows and surges. I'm thinking of the Dal river."

The men said not a word. They sat silent, with eyes downcast. At the mention of the Dal river all thought of the lost fountains and streams of Palestine vanished from their minds.

That day, at noon, another death occurred. It was one of the Gunnar children that died—a bright little lad who had endeared himself to them all. Yet none of the Swedes seemed to mourn for the child; instead they were filled with terror. To them the little dead boy lay there as a sign that they could never recover from this illness.

There were the usual hasty preparations for the burial. The men who made the coffin wondered who would do that work for them, and the women who dressed the body talked of how they wanted to be laid out. "Remember, in case you outlive me," said one woman to the other, "that I'd like to be buried in my own clothes." "And bear in mind," said the other, "that I want black crêpe on the coffin, and want to be buried with my wedding-ring."

In the midst of the funeral arrangements a whisper passed through the colony. No one knew who had started it, but once it was in the air it set them all thinking. As often happens, they thought at first that what had been suggested was not feasible, but by and by it impressed them as being the only sensible course to

pursue. Soon all the colonists, both Swedes and Americans—sick and hale—were saying that the Dalecarlians should be sent back to their homeland.

The Americans feared that all these peasants would die if they remained in Jerusalem. However regrettable it might be to have so many good people leave the colony, they felt that it would be far better for them to go home and serve the cause of God in their own country than to perish here.

The Swedes at first felt that they could not tear themselves away from this land, with its sacred places and memories. They trembled at the thought of again being thrust out into the world of unrest and strife, after the peaceful and sheltered community life of the colony. Some declared they would rather die than leave. Then came thoughts of home, insistent and beguiling. "Perhaps, after all, we might as well go," they said now.

Suddenly they heard the bell that usually called the colonists to prayers, and knew it meant that they should assemble in the meeting-room. They were startled and much perturbed, for they understood, of course, that Mrs. Gordon was calling them together in order to consult with them about the matter of their homegoing. They did not know themselves just what they wished to do, but the mere thought that they could get away from all this sickness and death brought with it a sense of relief. Some, who were very ill, actually got up and dressed, that they might attend the meeting.

There was no such quietude and orderliness as prevailed at regular meetings. Instead of sitting down, as usual, people stood about in groups, talking. They were all more or less agitated, none more so than Helgum, he who had persuaded the Dalecarlians to come to Jerusalem. Realizing fully the weight of responsibility he had taken upon himself, he went from one to another, urging them to go back to Sweden.

Mrs. Gordon looked worn and troubled. She seemed so undecided as to what should be done that she dreaded to open the meeting. They had never seen her hesitate like this.

The Dalecarlians were for the most part silent. They were too weak and ill to think for themselves, and stood waiting for the others to decide for them.

The young American women felt so sorry for these suffering people that they wept, and implored their compatriots to send the Swedes home rather than let them remain here to die.

While this matter was eagerly discussed, for and against, the door opened softly and Karin Ingmarsson entered.

Karin had aged perceptibly. She was now quite frail and bent. Her face had grown thin and haggard and her hair had turned almost white. Since the death of her husband, Halvor Halvorsson, she had rarely been known to leave her room, where she sat all day long in a big easy-chair Halvor had made for her. Now and then she would mend or sew a little for the two children still

left to her; but most of the time she sat with her hands crossed, gazing straight before her.

No one could enter a room more modestly than did Karin, but now, for some reason, they all ceased talking when she appeared, and turned to look at her. She stole quietly up the side aisle to where Mrs. Gordon was standing, and the latter greeted her with outstretched hand.

"We are gathered here to talk over this matter of sending you home," Mrs. Gordon told her. "How do you feel about it, Karin?"

For an instant Karin seemed overcome. Then into her tired eyes came a look of intense longing. She saw, as in a vision, the old farm, and herself sitting once more by the open fire in the living-room, or standing at the gate of a spring morning to watch the cows go out to pasture.

This lasted but a moment. Karin immediately drew herself up and her face took on its habitual expression of stolid endurance. "There's one thing I should like to know," she said in English, loud enough for all to hear. "It was the voice of God that called us to Jerusalem; has anyone heard the voice of God command us to return?"

There was a dead silence. No one had a word to say.

Karin, like all the rest, was suffering from fever, and had barely finished speaking when she swayed, as if about to fall. Mrs. Gordon quickly caught her in her arms and led her away.

As Karin went past a group of peasants from her own

parish, one or two nodded to her and said: "Thank you for that, Karin."

The moment she had left the room the Americans again spoke of sending the Swedes home, as if nothing had occurred. The Dalecarlians, without a word, quietly moved toward the door.

"Why are you going?" said one of the Americans. "The meeting is about to begin; we are only waiting for Mrs. Gordon."

"Don't you know that everything has already been settled?" replied Ljung Björn. "You needn't hold any meeting on our account. We came near to forgetting, but now we remember, that no one save God can order our comings and goings."

The Americans observed in astonishment that Ljung Björn and his fellow countrymen held their heads higher now, and did not look so despondent and ill as when they entered the room. Their strength and courage had returned when the way they must take was made clear. They no longer thought of fleeing from peril.

Gertrude lay ill in the little chamber which she once shared with Gunhild. It was a bright and cosy room. Gabriel and Bo had made all the furniture, which was more decorative than that of the other rooms. The white curtains at the windows and the bed hangings Gertrude had herself woven and hem-stitched and edged with lace.

Since the death of Gunhild, Betsy Nelson, a Swedish-

American girl, had been Gertrude's room-mate. Betsy was devoted to Gertrude and now that the latter lay ill she nursed her with rare tenderness.

In the late afternoon of the day the Dalecarlians had decided to remain in Jerusalem, Gertrude was in a high fever, and talked incessantly. Betsy, who sat at the bedside of the sick girl, tried to soothe her.

Presently the door opened very gently and in came Bo; he entered as quietly as possible, and did not come forward, but stopped just inside the door. Gertrude was apparently unconscious of his presence, but Betsy quickly turned round to order him out of the sick-room. But when she saw Bo's face she felt sorry for him. "The poor man surely thinks that Gertrude is going to die!" she thought. "I suppose he feels that there is no hope for her now that her people are to remain in Jerusalem." She saw at once that Bo was in love with Gertrude. "I'd better let him stay," she thought. "Anyhow, I haven't the heart to deny him the comfort of seeing her while he can."

So Bo was allowed to remain just inside the door. He could hear every word Gertrude said. Her fever was not so high as to make her quite delirious, but she talked continually of rivers and wells, like all the other sick people, and complained that she was suffering agonies from the burning thirst that never left her.

Betsy poured some water into a glass, and offered it to her. "Drink this, dear," she said, "it isn't bad."

Gertrude raised her head a little from the pillow, seized

the glass with both hands and put it to her lips. Then she drew back, without even tasting the water. "Don't you notice how horribly it smells?" she whimpered. "Do you want me to die?"

"The water is both tasteless and odourless," Betsy assured her. "It has been thoroughly boiled and filtered, so that the sick may safely drink it."

Betsy tried her best to make her drink, but Gertrude pushed the glass away so violently that half its contents were spilled on the coverlet.

"I'm sick enough already, without your trying to poison me," moaned Gertrude.

"If you would only take a few sips of this water you'd soon feel better," Betsy persisted.

Gertrude suddenly broke into sobs.

"My precious child, you mustn't cry like that!" soothed Betsy.

"It seems dreadful that no one can fetch me some water that's fit to drink; that I must lie here and die of thirst without a soul to take pity on me."

"You know, dear, that we will gladly do everything we can for you," said Betsy, with a caress.

"Then why don't you fetch me some water? I'm only suffering from thirst. I'd feel all right again if I could just have a drink of fresh water."

"There is no better water than this to be found in Jerusalem," sighed Betsy mournfully.

Gertrude took no notice of this, but went on complaining: "It wouldn's seem so hard if one did not know

there was good water to be had. To think that one must lie here and perish with thirst, when right here in Jerusalem there is a whole well full of pure fresh water!"

Bo started at that and glanced questioningly at Betsy, who, with a shrug, shook her head as much as to say, that is just something she imagines.

As Bo still looked wonderingly at her, Betsy tried to make Gertrude explain what she meant. "I doubt that there is any really good water to be found in Jerusalem at this time," she said to draw Gertrude out.

"It seems strange, Betsy, that you should have such a poor memory! Or perhaps you were not with us the day we visited the place where Solomon's Temple once stood?"

"Indeed I was."

"Then if you remember, it was not in Omar's Mosque—the beautiful building at the center of the square—" said Gertrude thoughtfully, "but in that ugly old mosque at one end, that we found a well."

"Yes, I remember," said Betsy, "but I don't see why you should think the water there better than elsewhere in the city."

"It is hard to have to talk so much when I have such a burning thirst," Gertrude complained. "You should have listened when Miss Young told us about the well."

Even though it caused her agony to speak with lips dry and throat parched she began to narrate what she had heard about the well. "That is the only well in Jerusalem where there is always good water," she said.

"And this is due to the fact that its springs are in Paradise."

"How can you or anyone else know that?" asked Betsy, with a smile.

"But I do," replied Gertrude earnestly. "Miss Young told us how once during a severe summer drouth a poor water-carrier went into the old mosque for water. He hung his bucket on a hook at the end of the well-rope and lowered it. But when the bucket touched the surface of the water it slipped off the hook and sank to the bottom. Of course the man did not want to lose his bucket; so he hastened to fetch two other water-carriers and got them to lower him into the well." Gertrude raised herself on her elbow and looked at Betsy with feverish eyes. "He went very far down, you understand, and the lower he went down the more surprised he was; for from the bottom of the well came a soft light. When he at last felt firm ground under him the water had disappeared, and he found himself standing in a beautiful garden. Neither sun nor moon shone there, but a mellow, dawnlike light rested over the place, so that he could see it all quite distinctly. The strangest thing was that everything down there appeared to be asleep. The petals of all the flowers were closed, the leaves of the trees were folded and the grass lay limp on the ground. The most glorious trees stood sleeping, their crowns resting the one against the other, and the birds sat motionless on the branches. Nothing down there was either red or green; but everything looked gray as ashes—yet it was very

beautiful, understand." Gertrude pictured it all with extreme particularity, anxious that Betsy should be convinced.

"What happened to the man after that?"

"For a moment he stood wondering where he was; then he began to fear that the men who had let him down would lose patience if he stayed too long. But before allowing himself to be drawn up he went over to the biggest and loveliest tree in the whole garden and broke a branch off to take with him."

"I should think he might have stayed a little longer in the garden," said Betsy, smiling, but Gertrude took no notice of the interruption. "When he came up again," she went on, "he told the men of what he had seen, and showed them the branch from the garden below. Just think! the moment the branch came into the light and air it began to live. The leaves unfolded; they lost their gray look and became fresh and green. The other water-carriers knew then that he had been down to the Garden of Paradise, which lies slumbering under Jerusalem awaiting the Day of Judgment, when it will rise again with new glory and splendour." Gertrude now breathed heavily and sank back upon her pillow.

"Dear child, you'll tire yourself talking so much," said Betsy.

"I must talk so that you will understand why there is good water in that well. Of course no one would have believed that the man had been to Paradise if he had not brought the branch back with him, for that little

branch was not like any of the trees of this earth. Naturally the other water-carriers immediately wanted to go down the well to see Paradise; but by that time the water had returned, and however deep they dived they could not reach the bottom."

"Then no one else has seen Paradise?"

"No; but from that day the well has never run dry and though many, oh, ever so many have tried it, no one else has succeeded in reaching the bottom." Gertrude sighed deeply, then she began afresh: "I suppose it isn't intended that we shall see Paradise in this life."

"I suppose not," Betsy assented.

"But for us the important thing is to know that it lies peacefully waiting for us."

"To be sure," said Betsy.

"And now you surely understand that there must always be pure fresh water in the well whose springs are in Paradise."

"Dear heart! I only wish I could get you some of that water!" said Betsy wistfully.

Just then Betsy's little sister came to the door and beckoned to her. "Mother has been taken ill and is calling for you," said the child.

Betsy hesitated a moment; she did not see how she could leave Gertrude. Then she thought of Bo, who was still standing down by the door. "You can stay here with Gertrude till I come back, can't you?" she said to him.

"Yes," replied Bo. "I'll look after her as well as I can."

"Try to make her drink a little water, to take her mind from the thought that she will die of thirst," Betsy whispered to him before leaving.

Bo sat down in the chair beside the bed. It was all the same to Gertrude whether he or Betsy sat there; she went right on talking about the Well of Paradise, and lay picturing to herself how pure and fresh and cooling its water must be.

"You see, Bo, I can't make Betsy believe the water in that well is better than that in any other well in Jerusalem. That is why she won't try to get me some."

Bo had become very thoughtful. In a while he said: "I wonder if I shouldn't go fetch you a little of that water."

Gertrude in alarm gripped him by the coat-sleeve, to hold him back. "No, no! you mustn't do it. I only complain to Betsy because I'm so thirsty. I know well enough that she can't get me any water from the Well of Paradise. Miss Young has told us that the Mohammedans look upon it as something so sacred that they never allow any Christian to take water from it."

"I could dress myself up as a Mohammedan," Bo suggested.

"Don't think of such a thing!" cried Gertrude. "That would be very foolish of you."

However, Bo could not dismiss the thought. "If I were to speak to the old cobbler who mends our shoes, I'm sure he would let me wear his clothes."

Gertrude lay quietly thinking a moment; then she said: "Is the cobbler here today?"

"Yes," replied Bo.

"Anyhow, nothing will come of it," sighed Gertrude.

"I had better be off at once," said Bo. "This late in the day there's no fear of my being sunstruck."

"But aren't you dreadfully afraid? You must know that if they recognize you as a Christian they will kill you."

"Oh, I'm not a bit afraid," laughed Bo. "Once I am properly fitted out with a red fez and white turban and get my feet into a pair of shabby yellow slippers and my blouse tucked up the way water-carriers wear theirs, no one will ever guess that I'm not a son of Islam."

"What will you fetch the water in?"

"I'll take two of our big copper buckets and hang them on a yoke laid across my shoulders."

Bo could see that the very thought of his going to fetch water had put new life into Gertrude, though she still continued to protest. At the same time it struck him how impossible the whole thing was. "How could I get water at the mosque?" thought he—"a place so sacred to the Mohammedans that a Christian may hardly set foot in it? The brethren in the colony would not consent to my attempting anything of the kind, however much I might like to. Besides, it wouldn't help matters if I went, for the water in the Well of Paradise is probably just as bad as the rest of the water here."

While he sat pondering this he was surprised to hear

Gertrude say: "At this time of day there are not many people out on the road."

"She evidently expects me to go," thought Bo. "Now I'm in a pretty fix! Gertrude seems so hopeful that I dare not tell her this thing can't be done. Yes—you are right," he said hesitatingly; "I'll have no trouble whatever until I come to the Damascus gate, unless I happen to meet some of the colonists."

"They may perhaps forbid your going," said Gertrude, in alarm.

Bo was about to say something to that effect, but seeing how troubled Gertrude was, he weakened. "There's no fear of their stopping me," he replied in a cheery voice, "for they won't even recognize me, coming dressed as a water-carrier, with the big copper buckets dangling about my legs."

Gertrude seemed reassured. Her thoughts at once took a fresh turn. "Those buckets must hold a lot!"

"You'd better believe they do," said Bo. "You couldn't drink up all the water they can hold in days and days."

Gertrude looked at him with eyes that fairly begged him to continue.

"Once inside the Damascus gate I shall have some difficulty getting past the crowds," he told her.

"The other water-carriers manage to do it."

"Well, you see, it isn't only people that block the way, there are camels too." Bo tried to bring up all possible obstacles.

"Do you think you'll be long getting back?" asked the sick girl anxiously.

Bo felt that it would never do to tell Gertrude how impossible the whole thing was. So he said: "With the buckets full of water, I might have to wait a while, but now that they are empty I can slip through, between the camels."

Gertrude put out a thin hand and stroked Bo's hand. "It is so good of you to go and fetch water for me," she said in the softest voice.

"God forgive me for making her think I can do it!" he murmured. As Gertrude continued to caress his hand he went on to tell her how he would proceed, as though he were really on his way. "Now, I'll go straight on till I come to the Via Dolorosa."

"There are never any crowds in that street," said Gertrude jubilantly.

"No; there I'm not likely to meet anyone except a few old nuns, and can continue without stopping till I get down to the seraglio and the prison." Bo paused a moment. Gertrude still caressed his hand. It was to him as a silent prayer to go on. "I verily believe that just my talking of going for water makes her feel less thirsty. Now I must tell her all that happens along the way."

"There's a big crowd in front of the prison. A policeman is dragging a thief along to lock him up. Everybody is talking about the arrest."

"But you'll hurry by as fast as you can, won't you?" said Gertrude.

"If I do that every one will know that I'm not a native. No, I must stop a while and listen, as if I understood all they said."

"When you don't understand a word of it?"

"Oh, I understand enough to know the talk is about one caught stealing. As there is no more excitement to be got out of that thief, the crowd scatters and I move on. Now I have only to pass through a dark archway, and I'm at the Temple Square. As I try to step over a youngster lying asleep in the middle of the path a boy trips me and I begin to swear in Swedish. Now I am frightened at myself, and look furtively at the young ones to see whether they noticed anything; but they lie weltering in the dirt—lazy and indifferent as before."

Gertrude's hand still rested on Bo's—which made him so extravagantly happy that he could have said or done anything in the world to please her. It seemed to him as if he were telling a child a fairy-story, and for the sheer fun of it he embellished the tale more and more. "I shall have to make as much of this thing as I can," he thought, "as it seems to amuse her. Later I must try to get out of it in some way. Now I find myself in the large open Temple Square in the sunlight. I must confess that for the moment I can't think of you or the well or the water I'm to fetch."

"What in the world has happened?" asked Gertrude, smiling at Bo.

"Nothing has happened," he said, with positive assurance; "but it is so light and beautiful and peaceful out

here, so different from the dingy town I have just passed through, that I only want to stand and look about. There is so much to be seen here—the splendid Mosque of Omar, standing on the raised ground in the centre, and the many pavilions and archways and stairways and enclosed wells. Then, too, think of all the sacred memories this place holds! Standing on the site of the old Temple of the Jews, I wish the paving-stones could speak and tell me of all that has transpired here."

"But isn't it very imprudent of you to stand there so long, considering how foreign you look?"

"Gertrude wants me to hurry home with that water," thought Bo. "Strange how eager she is. I believe she imagines I'm on my way to the Well of Paradise." And indeed it was the same with himself; for he had become so absorbed in his story that he seemed to see before him the whole Temple Square, and talked of the make-believe adventures as though they were actual happenings.

"Nor do I stand still very long, but hurry past Omar's Mosque; past the great dark cypress trees to the south, and past the big reservoir, which is said to be the copper vessel from Solomon's Temple. Everywhere I see people lying about on the pavements, basking in the sunshine. Here and there I come upon children at play and idlers asleep. A dervish sheik is sitting on the ground surrounded by his disciples. As he talks to them he bends forward and back, forward and back, and as I stand watching him the thought comes to me that Jesus once sat in this very Temple Place, teaching His disciples. Suddenly

the dervish sheik looks up at me. You can imagine how frightened I am! He has big dark eyes that look straight through me."

"I only hope he won't see that you are not a regular water-carrier!" said Gertrude.

"He doesn't appear to be in the least surprised at seeing me; but now I have to pass by two real water-carriers drawing water from a well. As they call to me, I glance back and motion to them that I'm going into the mosque."

"What if they should suspect you that you are not a Mussulman?"

"They are not looking my way now, but stand talking and laughing."

"Maybe they see something that's funnier than you are."

"Maybe. Ah! Now at last I'm at the old mosque El Aksa, where the Well of Paradise is. And at the gate standing close together are the twin pillars of which it has been said that no one can pass between them save he who is without sin. So I shall not attempt to squeeze myself through to-day, when I'm out to steal water."

"How can you say that?" Gertrude protested. "Why, what you are now doing is the kindest thing you've ever done in all your life." She had just enough fever not to be able to distinguish between the actual and the seeming, and fully believed that Bo had gone to get water for her from the Well of Paradise.

"I take off my slippers to go into the mosque." Bo was astonished at the ease with which he made up this

tale. But he dreaded the moment when he would have to tell Gertrude that in reality he could not get her the water. "Coming in, I see the well to the left amid a forest of pillars. Above it there is a windlass, with a rope and hook, so it's easy to lower and fill the buckets. And indeed it is pure, clear water I'm drawing here. 'Wait till Gertrude sees and tastes it,' I say to myself, 'she'll be better right away.'"

"I hope you won't be long coming home with it," said Gertrude eagerly.

"I'm not quite as sure of myself as I was a while ago," Bo replied. "Now that I have the water I'm afraid of losing it, for, going toward the door, I hear cries and shouts, and my fears increase."

"What does that mean?" asked Gertrude, now pale with anxiety.

Seeing how real this was becoming to her, Bo gave full rein to his imagination. "It means that all Jerusalem is after me!" he exclaimed, then held his breath a moment, in pretended terror. "All who were lying about on the stones when I came have risen, and are now standing outside the mosque. Their shouts are bringing people from every direction. The head official from the Mosque of Omar in his big turban and lamb-skin coat comes rushing up, children come darting out from doorways and gateways and from every nook and corner of the square idlers and vagabonds emerge. I'm confronted by a howling threatening mob. I see only open mouths, waving arms, clenched fists, and a riot of colour—brown-

striped mantles, red sashes, fluttering tunics and yellow slippers."

While telling this, Bo glanced stealthily at Gertrude, who no longer questioned him, but listened in eager suspense. In her excitement she had raised herself a little from the pillow.

"Although I don't understand a word they are shouting, I know that they are angry because a Christian has dared to take water from the Well of Paradise."

Gertrude, white as death, sank back upon her pillow. "I can see that you'll not be able to bring me any of that water," she said faintly.

"No, alas!" he thought. But perceiving how disappointed she was, he weakened again. "After all I shall have to see that Gertrude gets this paradise-water."

"Do they take the water away from you?" she asked.

"No; at first they only stand there and shriek. They don't seem to know what to do." Bo hesitated a moment. Nor did he himself know how to proceed.

Then Gertrude came to his aid. "I was hoping that he who sat talking to his disciples would help you," she said.

Bo drew a deep breath. "Perhaps he will. I see that the grand official in the fine lamb-skin coat has just said something to the people. Suddenly they draw their daggers to rush upon me. It looks as if they mean to kill me on the spot. But, strange to say, I have no fear for my life; I'm only afraid the water will be spilled. The instant the men start toward me I set the buckets

on the ground and place myself in front of them, and, before they can lay hands on me, I strike out with my fists and knock them down. They seem taken by surprise; they never knew before what it was to fight with a Dalecarlian. Instantly they scramble to their feet, and are joined by others. I'm afraid I can't hold my own against so many."

"Now you'll see that the dervish sheik will come and help you," Gertrude put in.

Bo instantly caught at this straw. "Yes, he has just come forward, and is saying a few words to the people. They at once leave off threatening and assaulting me."

"I think I know what he does now," said Gertrude.

"He looks at me with calm, penetrating eyes."

"And then——?"

Bo tried his utmost to think up something, but he was at his wits' end. "I'm sure you must have guessed already," he said to make Gertrude talk.

The sick girl saw the whole scene as if enacted before her eyes. "Now he pushes you aside and looks down into the buckets."

"Yes," said Bo, "that is exactly what he does."

"He looks into the water from the Well of Paradise," said Gertrude significantly.

Bo, without knowing it, read her thoughts. He saw at once how she expected the story to end, and went on narrating with much fervour: "You know, Gertrude, that there was nothing but water in the buckets when

I brought them out from El Aksa—nothing but clear water."

"And now——"

"As the dervish sheik bends over the buckets I see two twigs floating in the water."

"I felt sure that would happen, and don't you see that the twigs have crumpled gray leaves?"

"Yes."

"The dervish must be some sort of miracle man."

"I think he is," said Bo; "and he's kind and compassionate, too."

"He bends down and takes up the twigs," said Gertrude, "and, as he raises them high, the leaves unfold and become fresh and green."

"And the people break into cries of rapture," Bo quickly struck in. "And the dervish, holding in his hand the lovely leaves, goes up to the high official from the mosque. He points to the twigs and he points to me. It's easy to tell what he is saying—'That Christian has brought these leafy twigs from Paradise. Do you not see that he is under God's protection? It would never do to murder him.' Then the sheik comes over to me, still holding the leaves. I can see how they shine in the sunlight, and change colour; now they are red as copper, now blue as steel. He helps me place the yoke across my shoulders, and signs to me to go. I hurry away at once, but I keep looking back. He still stands there holding the shining leaves high in the air, and the crowds stand gazing at him in silent wonder."

"God bless him!" cried Gertrude, smiling up at Bo. "And you are bringing me the water from Paradise."

"Yes, I'm coming now," said Bo.

Gertrude raised her head—expectant.

"Good God, she thinks the water is here. It was dreadful of me to deceive her. She will die if I tell her that the kind of water she craves is not here."

In his desperation he seized the glass of water that Betsy had offered Gertrude—and held it out to her. "Now, Gertrude, will you have a taste of this water from Paradise?" he said.

Gertrude sat up in bed, grasped the glass with both hands, and greedily swallowed half its contents. "Bless you for this!" she cried. "You have saved my life."

"You shall have more by and by," said Bo.

"I want you to give the other sick people some of this water, so that they, too, will get well."

"The water from the Well of Paradise is for you alone."

"But you must drink of it so you'll know how good it is."

"I will," said Bo, joyfully taking the glass. He turned it so that his lips would touch the place where hers had just rested.

But before he had emptied the glass Gertrude had sunk back on her pillow and fallen asleep as easily and quickly as a child.

INGMAR INGMARSSON

INGMAR INGMARSSON

ONE SUNDAY afternoon, when the Dalecarlian peasants had been in Jerusalem about a year and a half, they, with the other colonists, were assembled in the large meeting-room for the usual Sabbath service. Although it was drawing on toward Christmas, the weather was so mild that they could sit comfortably with all the windows wide open.

In the midst of the singing of a hymn the gate-bell rang. It was a faint and modest ring—just a single stroke—which could not have been heard had the windows been closed. A young man seated by the door went out to open the gate.

A moment later a heavy footstep was heard on the marble stairway. Someone was mounting slowly and cautiously. When the person coming up had reached the top step he paused a while before crossing the floor of the large open corridor leading to the assembly room. Presently the door was opened ever so little, as if that was as far as it would go.

At the first sound of the footsteps the Dalecarlians involuntarily lowered their voices in order to hear better; and now they all turned their faces toward the entrance, that slow hesitating manner of opening a door was something they knew so well! For a moment they quite for-

got where they were and fancied they were back in their own homes in Dalecarlia. But they immediately bethought themselves, and looked down at their hymn-books.

The door now opened a little farther, but without the one outside coming into view. The colour surged into the face of Karin Ingmarsson, and of one or two of the other women, as they tried to collect their thoughts and follow the hymn, while the men sang with fuller tone than before, without trying to keep in tune.

At last, when the door was about half-open, a tall plain-looking man appeared. His bearing was humble, and, in his anxiety not to disturb the service, he did not go quite into the room, but stopped just inside the threshold, standing with head bowed and hands folded.

His clothes were of fine black broadcloth, but were creased and baggy. His hands, large, strong and thick-veined, stuck far out from under a pair of crumpled cuffs. He had a big freckled face with white eyebrows, a protruding under-lip and a drawn look about the mouth.

The moment the newcomer appeared inside the door Ljung Björn rose to his feet, but went right on singing. Immediately all the Dalecarlians, old and young, stood up, and finished the hymn standing. They kept their eyes on their hymn-books and not a smile crossed their faces; but now and then one would steal a glance at the man down by the door.

All at once there came a burst of song, as when a fire is livened by a gust of wind. The four Ingmar daughters,

all of whom had sweet voices, led the singing, and there was a vigour and a jubilant ring to the music that had not been there before. The Americans looked with astonishment at the Dalecarlians, who, without being conscious of it, were singing in Swedish.

BOOK TWO

BARBRO SVENSDOTTER

THE DAY after Ingmar's arrival Karin kept to her own room as usual. In her joy at seeing her brother again, she had spent the previous evening in the meeting-room and had taken part in the conversation. But now her old lethargy had returned; she sat stiff and motionless in Halvor's chair, staring straight before her.

The door opened noiselessly and Ingmar came in. Karin was not conscious of his presence until he stood quite close to her. Embarrassed at having her brother find her sitting like this, with idle hands, she hastily took up a half-finished stocking.

Ingmar drew up a chair and sat down, without speaking to or looking at Karin. Then it occurred to her that the night before she and the others had only spoken of their life in Jerusalem, and that he had not told them anything about himself or why he had come to them. "It must be this he has come to tell me," thought Karin.

Ingmar's lips moved, as if he were about to speak, but no words came.

Karin, meanwhile, sat regarding him. "How he has aged!" she thought. "Father, old as he was, had not deeper lines in his forehead. Ingmar has either been

very ill or has passed through some sore trial since I last saw him."

She wondered what had happened. She had a vague recollection that her sisters had once read aloud something from a letter concerning him, but at that time she was so much absorbed by her own sorrow that matters of the outer world which did not immediately affect herself left no lasting impression upon her mind. She tried now, in her own peculiar way, to make Ingmar tell her how he had fared and what had brought him to Jerusalem. "It is good of you to come in to see me," she said, "so that I may hear what is going on in the old parish."

"There are many things that I am sure you will want to know,"Ingmar replied.

"The people at home have always felt they must have someone to lead them," said Karin, speaking slowly, as if trying to recall something that had long been absent from her mind. "First they had father, then Halvor, and for a long time it was our old schoolmaster. I wonder whom they have for a leader now?"

Ingmar looked down, but said nothing.

" It is the pastor, perhaps," pursued Karin.

Ingmar sat very straight in his chair and continued silent.

"Or maybe it's Ljung Björn's brother Pehr who is the big man of the parish?" Nor did this bring forth a response. She tried again: "I know that in the old days people used to turn to the master of Ingmar Farm for help

and guidance, but of course one would hardly expect them to go to a young man like you for advice."

"You know that I'm not old enough to be made a member of the Parish Council or the District Council."

"But one can be a leader without holding public office."

"Yes, indeed one can."

"I have ceased to care about such things," Karin told herself, but all the same she could not help feeling pleased that the old family power and influence had passed on to Ingmar. "I might have known that people would understand you did right to take over the farm."

Ingmar looked sharply at Karin. He divined what lay back of her remarks. She was afraid that he had been held up to contempt by the parish for jilting Gertrude. "God has not punished me in that way," he said.

"Then he has passed through some other trying experience," she thought. It was difficult for her to call to mind the hopes and desires she had cherished in the old days. "I wonder if there are any in the parish now who have continued faithful to our teachings," she said.

"One or two perhaps."

"I had hoped there might be others who would receive a call from God to join us," said Karin, with an inquiring glance.

"No one has been called, so far as I know," Ingmar replied.

"Yesterday, when I saw you, I thought that perhaps you had experienced this blessing."

"I'm not here for any such reason."

Karin put her next query with hesitancy, as if afraid of the answer she might get: "I suppose no one at home thinks any more about us out here?"

To which Ingmar replied, with some embarrassment: "Folks don't grieve as much for you now as they did in the beginning."

"Then they really missed us. I thought it would be a relief to them to be rid of us."

"Indeed you were missed!" Ingmar fervently assured her. "It was a long time before your old associates could affiliate with the newcomers who had moved into your homes. I know that Beritte Persson, who lived next door to Ljung Björn's people, used to steal out every night last winter and walk round the house where they had lived."

"Then Beritte must have mourned more than anyone else."

"Oh, no!" said Ingmar, "there was another who stole out every evening last autumn, and rowed across the stream to the old schoolhouse to sit on a rock by the riverside where Gertrude used to sit and watch the sun set."

Karin thought she knew now why Ingmar looked so old and promptly changed the subject. "Is your wife looking after the farm in your absence?" she inquired.

"Yes."

"She is a good housewife, I suppose?"

"Yes."

Karin sat smoothing the creases in her apron. She remembered having heard her sisters say that all was not well between Ingmar and his wife. "Have you no child?" she asked.

"No," said Ingmar.

Karin, at a loss what to say next, went on smoothing her apron. She could not ask Ingmar straight out why he had come.

Then Ingmar himself came to the rescue. "Barbro and I are going to be divorced," he said in a hard voice.

Karin straightened. All at once she felt as if she were still mistress of Ingmar Farm. Her old feelings and prejudices came to the fore. "God forbid!" she exclaimed. "There has never been a divorce in our family."

"This matter is already settled," said Ingmar. "At the autumn sessions we were granted a separation for a year, and at the expiration of the year we shall apply for a full divorce."

"What have you got against Barbro?" Karin demanded to know. "You could never find a more estimable wife or one so well-to-do."

"I have nothing against her," Ingmar replied.

"Is it she who wants the divorce?"

"Yes."

"If you had treated her as you should have done she would not have wanted a divorce," said Karin hotly, gripping the arms of her chair. "It's well father and

Halvor are dead, so they won't have to be dragged into this!"

"The dead are better off than the living," sighed Ingmar.

"You've come out here on account of Gertrude!" Karin flung at him.

Ingmar bowed his head but did not answer.

"I don't wonder you feel ashamed of yourself."

"I felt more ashamed of myself on the day of the auction at Ingmar Farm."

"What do you suppose people will think of your coming to seek a new wife before you are off with the old!"

"I was obliged to come," said Ingmar quietly, "to look after Gertrude. We received word that she was going out of her mind."

"There was no need of your troubling yourself," snapped Karin. "There are those here who take better care of Gertrude than ever you can."

For a while neither of them spoke. Presently Ingmar got up to go. "I had expected a different outcome from our talk," he said with so much dignity of manner that Karin could not but feel a certain respect for him, such as she had felt for their father. "I supposed, of course, that you would want to help me right the great wrong I have done Gertrude and her parents, who have been as a father and mother to me."

"You only make bad worse by leaving your lawful wife," Karin retorted, trying to liven her dying wrath with hot words. She had begun to fear that her

brother might make her see the thing from his point of view.

Ingmar, however, did not take up the allusion to his wife. He only said: "I thought you would approve of my trying to walk in the ways of God."

"Do you expect me to think you are walking in the ways of God, when you leave wife and home to run after your old sweetheart?"

Ingmar moved slowly toward the door. He looked tired and worn, but showed no sign of wrath. Nor did he look like a man dominated by a great passion.

"If Halvor were alive," said Karin, "I know that he would advise you to go home and make up with your wife."

"I have ceased to act upon the advice of men."

Then Karin stood up. Her wrath kindled afresh at Ingmar's intimation that he was acting in accordance with the will of God. "Gertrude doesn't think of you now in the way that she thought in the old days."

"I'm well aware that no one in the colony thinks about marriage," Ingmar replied, "but just the same I mean to try for Gertrude."

"You need not concern yourself with what we who belong to the colony have promised each other," she retorted. "But perhaps you will not be so eager to press your suit, when I tell you that Gertrude now cares for someone else."

Ingmar put his hand on the latch.

Karin immediately repented her words. "Don't mis-

understand me!" she said. "I would not have you think that any of us love with an earthly love; but I'm sure that Gertrude now loves the humblest of the brethren in the colony more than she does you, who are not of us."

Ingmar drew a deep breath, then he quickly opened the door and went out.

Karin sat for awhile cudgelling her brains. Presently she arose, smoothed her hair, put on her kerchief, and went to see Mrs. Gordon.

She frankly told Mrs. Gordon why Ingmar had come to the colony, and advised her to send him away at once if she did not wish to lose one of the sisters. While Karin was speaking Mrs. Gordon gazed out of the window upon the courtyard, where Ingmar Ingmarsson, looking more gawky and helpless than usual, stood leaning against the wall. A faint smile flitted across Mrs. Gordon's face, as she replied that she could not think of turning anyone out of the colony, least of all one who had come from such a far-distant land and had so many near relatives among the colonists. "If God wills that Gertrude shall be tried, we must help her to stand firm in the Faith."

This was a surprise to Karin. In her eagerness she went close to Mrs. Gordon and near enough to the window to see at what she smiled. Karin, for her part, only saw how like his father Ingmar had grown and, indignant as she was at her brother, it provoked her to think Mrs. Gordon apparently did not perceive that he who

looked thus was a man among men—wiser and more capable than most of them.

"Perhaps it's just as well to let him stay," said Karin, "for he'll manage to have his own way in any case."

In the evening of that day most of the colonists were gathered together in the large drawing-room, where they were having a pleasant and sociable time. Some sat watching the children at play; others were discussing the day's happenings; and a little group over in a corner sat reading American magazines. When Ingmar Ingmarsson came into the large, well-lighted room and saw all these happy and contented people he could not help thinking to himself: "Evidently our Dalecarlian peasants are happy here and do not long for home. These Americans understand so much better than do we how to make it pleasant for themselves and others. It must be because of the good home life here that the colonists are able to meet every sorrow and privation with fortitude. True, some who once had homes of their own must now put up with a single room; but, in return, they get more out of life. Then, too, they have seen and learned a lot. I doubt if there's a child here that doesn't know more than I do, to say nothing of the grown folk."

Some of the peasants came up to Ingmar and asked him if he did not think they were very comfortable here.

He had to concede that they were.

"I suppose you thought we lived in caves," said Ljung Björn.

"Oh, no; I knew it couldn't be so bad as all that."

"We have been told a report to that effect has been spread at home."

Of course everyone wanted to know how things were going in the old parish. One after another they came and sat down by Ingmar to get news of relatives and friends, and nearly all asked after old Eva Gunnarsdotter. "She's hale and hearty," said Ingmar, "and talks about the Helgumists to every one she meets."

Ingmar noticed a young man who had kept close to him the whole evening, but had not spoken. "I wonder who he is? Why, he looks as if he'd like to throw me out of the room." Then, it dawned on him that the man was his cousin Bo, who had been in America several years.

Ingmar immediately went up to Bo and gave him greetings from home. When Bo had asked about his own people, he wanted to know how the schoolmaster was. This produced a marked silence in the circle around Ingmar. Until then no one had dared to mention the schoolmaster. One or two of the men nudged Bo. Ingmar quietly informed him that all was well with Storm and that he had decided to retire at the end of the school year. Then he added: "I'm glad you inquired so kindly about Storm, though he was rather rough on you at school."

Remembering how often Storm had bemoaned Bo's stupidity they all chuckled. Bo turned on his heel and walked away.

Old Corporal Felt had gathered some of the children round him, and was telling them stories. Ingmar, who had not seen Felt since the latter had turned child-lover, was surprised at the change in him, and went over to the old man, to hear what he was telling the youngsters.

Just then he was relating how one night, when he was a lad, he had pounded on the door of the church and called to the dead to come forth.

Martha Ingmarsson, who stood near, glanced at the children sitting around Felt, and noticed that they were pale from fright. "You mustn't tell them ghost-stories," she said sternly, "but give them something helpful and instructive."

The old man thought a moment, whereupon he said: "I'll tell them a story my mother once told me when she was trying to teach me to be kind to animals."

"Yes, do!" said Martha Ingmarsson as she walked away. Ingmar remained to listen. "At home in Dalecarlia," began the old corporal, "there is a place called Sorrow Hill, and it has got that name because a very bad and cruel man once lived there."

Ingmar moved a step or two nearer, so as not to miss a word. "The man was a horse dealer," Felt continued, "who went about from fair to fair, trading horses. He treated the animals shamefully. Sometimes he would paint a white spot on the forehead of a horse which was known to have the staggers, so that no one should recognize it; and sometimes he fed up old hacks and made

them look fat and sleek for a while—just long enough to get them traded off. But he mistreated his horses worst of all when trying them in the shafts. Then he seemed to be possessed, and would whip the animals dreadfully. Once the man had been at a fair a whole day without being able to make a deal. It was partly due to his having fooled people so often that they were beginning to fight shy of him, and partly because the horse he wanted to dispose of was so old and worthless that no one would have it. He drove the poor brute at a mad gallop up and down among the crowds, lashing it until the blood flowed down the traces; but the more he tried to show off the horse the less grew his chances of finding a purchaser.

"Along toward evening he began to think that he would do no business that day. However, he decided to try his luck once more before going home; so he drove his horse around the market-place at such a furious pace that everyone thought it would surely fall dead. As he went tearing along he caught sight of a man driving a fine black filly and who drove just as fast as himself, but without any apparent strain upon his horse.

"The horse-dealer had no sooner stopped and jumped down from his gig, than the owner of the black filly came up to him. He was a little, spare man with a narrow face and a pointed beard, and was dressed entirely in black. From the colour and cut of his clothes, it was impossible to tell to what parish he belonged. He had a bay mare at home, the man told the horse-dealer, and

wanted to trade his black filly for a brown horse, so that he would have two of a kind. 'The horse you are driving,' said he, 'is a good match in colour and I shouldn't mind having it if it's all right in other respects. But you mustn't palm off a poor horse upon me, for there's nothing in the world I know so little about as horse-flesh.' It ended, of course, in the horse-dealer giving him his old hack in exchange for the fine black filly. Never in his life had he laid harness on a finer beast. 'No day ever began so badly for me and ended so well,' thought he, as he climbed into his gig to drive homeward.

"It was only a short distance from the fair-grounds to his place, and he got there before dark. As he drove in through the gate he saw a crowd of fellow horse-dealers from other parishes standing outside his house waiting for him. They appeared to be in a jovial mood and when he came up they shouted 'Hurrah' and laughed uproariously. 'What seems to tickle you fellows?' the horse-dealer asked them as he pulled up. 'Well, we were just waiting to see whether that innocent-looking chap succeeded in palming off his blind filly on you,' said one. 'We met him as he drove up to the fair, and he made a bet with us that he could take you in.'

"The horse-dealer instantly jumped down, placed himself in front of the horse, and dealt it a sharp blow between the eyes with the butt end of his whip. The animal made no move to dodge the blow. The men were right, the horse was blind.

"While his fellow-traders went on with their laughing and jeering, he unharnessed the filly, seized hold of the reins, and drove it up a steep hill just beyond the house —urging it on with curses and whip. The horse went at a brisk trot to the very top of the hill, when it suddenly stopped. There was a cleft up there, and below it was a deep and broad gravel-pit.

"The horse must have felt that the ground was undermined, for it refused to budge, although the man kept lashing it. The poor dumb brute, trembling from fright, reared, but go forward it would not. At last, goaded to desperation, it took a great leap, as if jumping a ditch and expecting to reach the other side. But there was no other side to be reached. Finding no foothold, it sent up a terrible shriek; the next moment it lay with broken neck at the bottom of the gravel-pit.

"The horse-trader never so much as glanced toward the animal, but went back to the men. 'So you're done laughing, are you?' he said. 'Now you can go tell the man who made the bet with you what has happened to his filly.'

"But this is not the end of the story," said Felt. "Now, children, pay close attention, and you shall hear what happened afterwards. Some months later the man's wife had a son, and that son was blind and an idiot. And that wasn't all, either, for every son born to the man from that time forth was a blind idiot. The daughters, however, were unusually bright and good looking, and all of them married well."

Ingmar had been standing the whole time spellbound. Now he made a movement as if to tear himself away, but as the old corporal immediately went on with the story, he stayed.

"Nor is that all!" Felt continued. "When the daughters married and had children, their sons too were blind idiots, while the daughters were strong, beautiful, intelligent girls. And thus it has been all along, up to this very day; the sons of anyone married to a daughter of that family have been blind and idiotic. That is why people have named the place Sorrow Hill, and I don't think it will ever be known by any other name."

When Felt had finished his story, Ingmar turned abruptly to Ljung Björn and asked if he would get him pen and paper. Björn looked a little surprised. Ingmar then said that he had an important letter to write, which he had forgotten about earlier in the day, but if he might write it now it could go out by the first train in the morning. After getting Ingmar what he wanted, Ljung Björn took him down to the carpenter-shop, where no one was likely to disturb him. He then lighted a lamp and placed a chair before the planing-bench. "Here you can sit and write in peace the whole night if you like," he said as he left.

The moment Ingmar was alone he flung out his arms as one does when one has a great longing for someone, and he groaned aloud. "Oh, I can't go on with this that I've taken upon myself!" he said. "Day and night I think only of her I have left behind me, and

besides, I don't believe there's anything I can do for Gertrude." He sat for a while deep in thought; then, smiling, he remarked to himself: "One who is full of doubts and fears sees signs and omens everywhere. But it does seem strange that Felt should have hit upon that particular tale. It was as if our Lord wanted to show me what I'd better do." He took up his pen. "In God's name, then," he said, putting the pen to the paper.

What Ingmar now wrote had been in his mind from the time he left home. It was a letter to the old pastor, and every word set down had been pondered and weighed many, many times. Though penned to the pastor, the letter was by no means intended for him alone. Ingmar had never talked things over with his wife, had never told her what he thought or felt, and now he wanted her to know what his real sentiments were. It seemed to him that the best way in which this could be done was to write to their pastor. But it was not an easy task; a certain shyness he had never been able to conquer prevented him from talking about himself. That evening, however, it had suddenly been made clear to him how he should go about it. "Yes, in that way I can do it," he thought; "in that way I can tell the pastor all he need know in order to plead my cause with Barbro."

Ingmar's letter ran thus:

"Sitting here in the stillness of the night, writing to Your Reverence, I wish above everything that I could go up to the parsonage to talk with you. I should like to come late in the evening, when you are in the quietude

of your study, thinking out your sermon. I picture to myself that for a moment Your Reverence would be startled at seeing me, as if a spectre had appeared to you. 'What are you doing here? I thought you had gone to Jerusalem?' Your Reverence would surely say. 'I should have been there by this time,' I would reply, 'but I turned back because of a story I heard on the way, which I want to te l Your Reverence.' And then I would ask you to have patience with me for an hour, while I tell a long story my heart prompts me to confide to you. And when I had your permission I should begin in this way:

"Once upon a time there was a man in this parish (I would say) who did not care for his wife. The reason was this: He had to give up someone of whom he was very fond and take the other, in order to keep his father's farm. But when making that bargain he had thought only of the old home and had failed to take into account that a wife went with the deal. After they were married and living at the farm, the man could not seem to understand that the wife belonged to him. He never wondered how she felt, whether she was happy or unhappy. Nor did he notice how she managed her home, whether things went well or ill. He thought so much about the other one that he was hardly aware that this one existed. To him she was simply a chattel that went with the farm. She had to look out for herself as best she could, for he wouldn't bother about her.

"But there was also a special reason for the man's

failure to appreciate his wife; he despised her because she would have him when he was in love with another woman. There must be something amiss with her, he thought, since her father had been obliged to buy her a husband.

"If the man ever took any notice of his wife, it was only to draw comparisons between her and the one he had lost. He had to admit that his wife was good-looking, but of course she was not as beautiful as the other. Her step was not so light, and she did not use her hands so gracefully, and she had not so many interesting and amusing things to tell. She went about her work quietly and uncomplainingly, which seemed about all she was good for.

"In justice to the man, it must be said that he did not tell his wife about that which was uppermost in his thoughts. He couldn't very well confess to her that he was always thinking of the mistress of his heart, who had gone away to a strange land. Nor did he want her to know that he was constantly expecting a punishment from God because he had broken his troth, and that he fancied everybody thought ill of him. All with whom he came into contact certainly showed him marked respect, but in his gloominess of mind he imagined that they sneered the instant his back was turned and said he was unworthy the name he bore, and much else of the same sort.

"Now I will tell you how this man first came to notice that he had a wife.

"When they had been married a couple of months, it happened that the man and his wife were invited to a wedding at the home of some relatives living in the wife's former parish. They had a long journey to make, and were obliged to stop for an hour at a wayside inn, to bait the horse. As it was raining, the wife went upstairs and waited in one of the rooms. When the man had watered his horse and given it some oats, he went up to the room where his wife was. He did not speak to her, but sat thinking with dread of having to meet a lot of people, and wondered whether the folk at the wedding would let him see what they thought of him. While sitting there tormenting himself, he felt that his wife was to blame for it all. If she had not wanted to marry him, he still would have been a man free from the fear of censure, and not ashamed to look decent people in the face.

"Never before had the man supposed he could come to hate his wife, but at that moment he did. It wasn't long, however, before he had other things to think about. Some men came into the next room. They had probably seen the man and his wife as they drove up, for they immediately began to talk about them. And the wall between was so thin that every word said in the one room could be heard in the other.

"'I wonder how those two get on together?' said one.

"'I never expected that Barbro Svensdotter would get married,' said another.

"'I remember how daft she was about Stig Börjesson, who worked on her father's farm one summer some three or four years ago.'

"When the wife heard them speaking about her, she said abruptly: 'Isn't it time we were off?' The husband preferred to remain until the men were gone, rather than have them know that he and his wife had been sitting in the next room.

"The men in the outer room went on talking about the wife. 'That Stig Börjesson had not a penny to his name, and Berger Sven Persson sent him away as soon as he saw that his daughter liked the fellow,' said one who seemed to know the whole story. 'Then Barbro became so ill from pining that the old man finally relented and went with Stig to the parson, and asked to have the banns published. But, strange to say, when the banns had been published the first time Stig suddenly changed his mind, and said he didn't want to marry. Sven Persson, for his daughter's sake, begged and implored Stig not to forsake her. But Stig was deaf to all prayers; he said that he had grown to hate Barbro and never wanted to lay eyes on her again. And then he went about telling everyone that he had never cared for Barbro, but that she had run after him.'

"Your Reverence can imagine the man's feelings on hearing these things; he dared not even glance at his wife. At the same time he felt that having listened to all this, they could not think of passing through the outer room, where the men were.

"'That was a dastardly thing Stig did,' observed another; 'but he has lived to repent it.'

"'So he has,' said one who had not spoken before. 'He went and married the first girl that would have him, just to show people that he wasn't thinking of Barbro. His wife turned out to be a good-for-nothing, and only poverty and misery came of that marriage. Now he has taken to drinking. But for Barbro, he and his would be in the alms-house; it is she who keeps both Stig and his wife in food and clothing.'

"After that nothing more was said about Barbro. In a little while the men left. The husband then went out to harness the horse, and when the wife came down stairs he lifted her into the carriage. She probably thought he did it so she wouldn't soil her dress on the muddy wheel, but as a matter of fact he wanted to show that he really felt sorry for her. Of course he did not care enough about her to be made unhappy by what he had heard. As they drove along, he turned now and then to look at her. So she was such a kind-hearted soul that she could help the one who had forsaken her, he mused. And to think that she should have been deceived the same as Gertrude.

"They had driven only a short distance when the man noticed that his wife was weeping. 'Don't you cry about that,' he said, 'it isn't strange that you, like myself, should care for another.' Afterwards he was vexed with himself for not having said a kind word to her.

"One would suppose that after all this he wondered at times whether his wife still cared for the other man, but such a thought never entered his mind. He didn't care enough for her to wonder who she did or did not love. He was completely absorbed by his own sorrowful musings and as often as not forgot that she existed. Nor was he surprised at her being so quiet and gentle, and never reproachful, though his treatment of her was not what it should have been.

"I must say that this apparent calmness, which never deserted her, finally caused the man to think that she did not know what troubled him. Then one cold and stormy autumn evening, when they had been married about half a year, the husband, who had been out since dusk, came home very late. In the big room where the servants slept it was all dark, but in the little room adjoining a cheerful fire blazed on the hearth. The wife was up and had a supper, which was a little better than common, ready for him. When he came in, she said: 'You must take your coat off, it's wet.' She helped him off with it, then held it to the fire. 'Why, it is wet through! I don't see how I'll ever get it dry by morning. Where have you been in such weather?' It was the first time she had ever put a query of that sort; he said nothing, but wondered what was coming. 'People are saying that every evening you row down to the school-house and sit on a stone by the riverside for hours.'

"'Let them talk,' the man replied as if not in the least

concerned; all the same it annoyed him to think that he was being watched.

"'But such things are not pleasant for a wife to hear.'

"'A wife who has bought a husband can't expect much else.'

"The wife was trying to turn one of the coat-sleeves inside out, which was something of a task, as the sleeve was thickly wadded and stiff as a board. The husband looked to see how she had taken his remark. There was a smile on her lips. When she had at last got the sleeve turned, she said: 'Oh, I wasn't so very eager to marry; it was father's doing.'

"The man again glanced at his wife, and when his eyes met hers, he thought: She looks as if she knew her own mind. 'You don't appear to be the kind that is easily coerced,' he said.

"'Maybe not,' returned the wife; 'but father is a difficult person to run counter to. The fox he can't hunt with a dog he traps.'

"The man did not answer; he was already back in his own thoughts, and hardly heard what she said. But the wife probably felt that having begun she might as well continue. 'Father, as you know, has always loved this old place, where he lived in his boyhood. He could talk of nothing but the Ingmarssons and the Ingmar Farm, and I believe I know more about all the people who have lived here than you do.'

"The husband, having finished his supper, got up from the table, and seated himself on the edge of the hearth,

with his back to the fire, so that he could see his wife's face.

"'Then all that which you know happened,' said the wife.

"'Never mind about that,' answered the man hastily—remembering with shame how he had let her sit and suffer that day at the inn.

"'But there are certain things that you must be told,' said the wife. 'After Stig had thrown me over, father was so afraid that no one would have me that he set about to find me a husband, offering me first to one, then to another. I soon sickened of the whole miserable business. Surely I was not such an undesirable person that it was necessary for father to entreat people to marry me?' As she said that she straightened herself, threw the coat onto a chair and looked the man straight in the eye. 'How to put a stop to all this I didn't know,' she went on; 'then one day I happened to say to father that I would never marry unless I could have Ingmar Ingmarsson of Ingmar Farm. I knew, of course, that Tims Halvor then owned the farm and that you were to marry the schoolmaster's daughter. I had seized upon something that seemed quite impossible merely to be left in peace. Father was dumbfounded. "Then you'll never be married," he said. "In that case I shall have to be content with single blessedness," I replied. "Do you mean it seriously?" he asked. "I do," said I, never dreaming anything would come of it. I should as soon have thought of his marrying me to the king. Then for

a couple of years he did not pester me with further matrimonial projects. I was as contented as could be. I managed father's big farm and had things my own way as long as father remained a widower. Then one evening in May he came home very late, and at once sent for me. "Now you can have Ingmar Ingmarsson of Ingmar Farm," he said. "I have bought the farm for forty thousand kronor." "But Ingmar is betrothed," I protested. "He can't care very much for the girl, since he wants to marry you," was father's reply.'

"Your Reverence can imagine the husband's chagrin on hearing this. 'What an extraordinary tale!' he thought. 'It is just like a play. Fancy my having to give up Gertrude merely because Barbro once by chance mentioned my name to her father!'

"'I was at a loss what to do!' said the wife. 'The thought of father paying out all that money on my account grieved me so that I couldn't say no at once. Nor had I the least idea how you felt about it—whether or not the farm was more to you than anything else. Father swore that he would sell the farm to the lumber company if I did not do as he wished. At that time things were not so very pleasant for me at home. Father had just married again for the third time, and I didn't care to be under the rule of a stepmother, when I myself had been the mistress of the house. And as I couldn't decide then and there whether to say yes or no, father had his way. I did not take the matter seriously enough, you see.'

"'Evidently not!' said the man; 'I suppose that to you it was a mere pleasantry.'

"'I did not realize what I had done until I heard that Gertrude had stolen away from home and gone to Jerusalem. But since that happened I have had no peace of mind. I'm not one who would wittingly cause another unhappiness. And now that I see how miserable you are, I feel that it's all my fault.'

"'Oh, no,' said the man; 'the blame rests with me alone, and I suffer no more than I deserve to suffer.'

"'Night after night I sit here wondering if I shall ever see you again,' the wife continued. "'Perhaps it will end with your being found in the river," I think to myself. And then I seem to hear people come bearing you in, and I wonder if I shall ever be able to forget that I was the cause of your death.'

"While she was telling of her fears and anxieties the man thought: 'Now she will want to be comforted and helped.' He only felt annoyed at her uneasiness for him; he was better satisfied when she kept her thoughts to herself, for then he did not have to consider her. 'I can't be burdened with her troubles, too,' he told himself.

"Feeling that he was obliged to say something, he said to her: 'Don't be uneasy about me; I'm not going to add a crime to my other offences.' And for just these few words from him her face brightened."

Here Ingmar rested his pen and looked up. "This is going to be a dreadfully long letter," he thought. "I shall have to sit here and write all night." It was a

pleasure to him thus living over all that had passed between him and Barbro. He hoped the pastor would show her the letter and that she would be glad when she saw how well he remembered everything.

Ingmar went on writing:

"For all the man imagined he did not care in the least about his wife, he remained at home the first few evenings after she had told him of her uneasiness. The wife did not show that she knew he stayed at home on her account. She seemed as quiet and placid as usual. But, as Your Reverence knows, she, Barbro, had always been very kind to all the old servants at Ingmar Farm, and they were devoted to her. As the master sat with his household by the open fire in the living-room old Lisa and old Bengt sat smiling and nodding to each other.

"For two whole evenings the man stayed in, but the third, which happened to be Sunday evening, the wife, to while away the time, brought out her guitar and sang. All went well until she started a tune that Gertrude loved to hum. Then the man took up his hat and left the house.

"It was pitch-dark outside and a cold, fine rain was falling. Getting into his boat, he rowed down to the school-house and seated himself on a stone by the river-side to dream of Gertrude and the days when he was a man of his word. It was long past midnight when he returned. He found his wife sitting by the river waiting for him.

"This irritated the man. Your Reverence knows how men dislike having their womenfolk worry about them. However, he said nothing to the wife until they were in their room. 'You must let me come and go as I please,' he then told her. She made no reply, but quickly struck a match and lighted a candle. The man noticed that her dress was rain soaked and clung to her figure. Wet as she was, she went to the kitchen and fetched him something to eat, made a fire on the hearth, and turned down the beds for the night. But she showed no feeling of either anger or resentment. He wondered if she was really so meek that nothing could vex her. Suddenly he turned to her and said: 'If I had treated you as I did Gertrude, would you have forgiven me?'

"She looked hard at him for a moment. 'No!' she said, her eyes flashing.

"The man wondered why she wouldn't forgive him when she had forgiven that fellow Stig. Did she think that he had done a worse thing than Stig in giving up Gertrude for material gain?

"A day or so later the man, trying to find a screwdriver he had mislaid, went to the wash-house to look for it. As he stepped into the little chamber at the back where old Lisa lay ill he found his wife sitting by her bedside reading aloud from the Bible. It was a huge old Bible with a thick leather binding and heavy brass mountings. The man stood for a moment regarding it. Barbro must have brought that from her home, he thought, and turned to go. In a moment he wheeled round, took

the Bible away from his wife and opened it to the front leaf. He found that it was an old Bible that had been in his family for generations and which Karin had disposed of at the auction. 'Where did this come from?' he asked.

"The wife said nothing, but old Lisa answered: 'Hasn't Barbro told you that she bought back this Bible?'

"'No,' said the man; 'has Barbro done that?'

"'She has done more than that,' added the old woman eagerly. 'Just take a peep into the blue cupboard in the living-room, and you'll see.'

"The man went straight to the house and into the big room. On opening the cupboard, he found two of the old silver beakers on the shelf. He took them down, examined the marks on the bottom, and knew them for the Ingmarssons'. While he stood there Barbro came in. She looked embarrassed.

"'I happened to have a little money in the savings-bank,' she said softly.

"The man was more pleased than he had been in many a long day. He went up to his wife and took her by the hand. 'Thank you for this,' he said. But almost immediately he let her hand drop and walked out of the house. Somehow he felt it would not be right for him to be tender to his wife; that he owed it to Gertrude not to show any love or kindness to the one who had taken her place.

"Some days later, as the man came out from the barn to go to the house, a stranger entered the yard. After

saluting, he asked if Barbro was at home. 'I'm an old friend of hers,' he said.

"Singularly enough, the man at once knew who it was. 'Then you are Stig Börjesson,' he said.

"'I didn't suppose anyone here would know me,' replied the fellow. 'I'm going away again directly. I only want to have a word with Barbro; but don't go tell Ingmar Ingmarsson that I've been here. He might not like my coming.'

"'Oh, I'm sure Ingmar has no objection to meeting you,' said the man; 'he has long been curious to see how a cur like you looks.' His wrath rose at the thought of that miserable wretch still going about pretending that Barbro Svensdotter was in love with him.

"'No man has ever called me a cur before, that I know of,' Stig muttered.

"'If no one has done so before, then I do so now,' returned the man, giving him a box on the ear.

"The fellow drew back, his face livid with rage. 'None of that!' he said. 'You don't know what you are doing. I only want to borrow some money from Barbro, that's all.'

"The man now felt a little ashamed of his rashness; he couldn't understand what had made him flare up like that. But he did not care to let the fellow see that he regretted his haste; so he said in a harsh voice: 'Don't imagine that I believe Barbro is in love with you; but I think you deserve to have your ears boxed for your contemptible treatment of her.'

"Stig Börjesson then went close up to the man. 'Now I'll tell you something in return for your striking me.' His voice sounded hoarse and threatening. 'What you are going to hear will probably hurt harder than any thrashing. As you seem to care such a lot about your Barbro, let me tell you that she comes of that horse-dealer's family at Sorrow Hill.'

"He waited to see what effect this would have upon the man. The latter only looked a little surprised. At first he could not call to mind what there was strange about Sorrow Hill, and then he remembered the story he had heard as a child, and which I daresay Your Reverence has also heard—that all the sons born of those who were descended from the Sorrow Hill people were blind and idiotic, while the daughters were more intelligent and beautiful than other girls. But the man had never believed there was any truth in this old tale; he just laughed at the fellow.

"'You don't believe that story, eh?' said Stig, coming still closer; 'but what if I should tell you that Sven Persson's second wife came of that family? The Sorrow Hill people all removed to another part of the country, where nobody knows about them. But my mother kept track of them. Yet she held her tongue, and didn't tell a soul who Sven Persson had got for a wife till I wanted to marry Barbro. After hearing that I couldn't think of marrying her; but, being an honorable man, I said nothing about it. Had I been the cur you take me for, I should have told everyone what I knew. For this I have

borne all kinds of insults in silence, until you struck me. Probably Sven Persson himself never knew of the blight upon his wife, for she died soon after the birth of their only child, Barbro. And the daughters of the Sorrow Hill folk are fine girls, you know; it's only the sons that are blind and idiotic. Now you've made your bed, so you'll have to lie on it. I've laughed to myself many a time, thinking of how you threw over your old sweetheart, and of the Ingmar Ingmarsson who will succeed you as master of the farm. I hope you'll have many happy days with your wife after this!'

"While Stig stood hissing all this into his face, the husband happened to glance toward the house, and seeing a corner of a skirt sticking out from behind the door, he guessed that Barbro had seen the meeting between him and Stig and had overheard everything. Then the man grew concerned. It was most unfortunate that Barbro should have heard this, he thought. Could it be that the thing he had feared so long had come at last? Was this the expected punishment from God?

"Then for the first time it was borne in upon the man that he actually had a wife, whom it was his duty to protect. He pretended to think light of Stig's revelations, and said with a forced laugh: 'Do you suppose I'm such a fool as you've been, and would let an old wives' tale wreck my happiness?'

"'Well, I've said enough for to-day,' returned Stig. 'In a year's time perhaps you'll think differently.'

"'Aren't you coming in to speak to Barbro?' the husband asked, seeing that the fellow was about to go.

"'No, I've changed my mind,' Stig replied.

"When he had gone the man went into the house to have a talk with his wife, but before he could speak she said quietly: 'We don't believe such silly nursery-tales, do we, Ingmar? Why should we be made to suffer for something that happened more than a hundred years ago, if it ever did happen?'

"'Oh, then you know the story,' said the man, not wanting her to think that he had seen her standing at the door listening.

"'Why, of course I have heard that old story. Who hasn't? But until to-day I never knew that it had anything to do with me.'

"'It was a pity you heard it,' said the man, 'but it doesn't matter so long as you don't believe in it.'

"The wife smiled. 'I don't feel as if a curse were hanging over me,' she told him. The man thought that never had he seen a finer looking woman than his wife. 'Anyone can see that you are sound in both body and mind,' he said.

"Late in the spring a child was born to them; it was a boy. The wife had been brave during the long months of waiting, and had never manifested the least sign of anxiety. The husband thought she had entirely forgotten all that Stig had said. As for himself, he had thought less about his own sorrow after that talk with Stig. He felt that he must behave so that his wife

would see that he did not believe in the curse which was supposed to rest upon her. He tried to show a happy face when at home, and not go about the house looking as if he were expecting the wrath of God to fall upon him. He began to take an interest in his property, and was helpful to people, as his father before him had been. 'It won't do for me to go around looking woebegone any longer,' thought the man, 'Barbro might think I believe in that mythical curse and am miserable on that account.'

"When the child came the wife was very happy. It was a fine baby with a broad, high forehead and large, clear eyes. She called her husband in again and again, to have him look at the child. 'He's all right,' said the mother, 'there is nothing amiss with him.' The man felt awkward. He put his hands behind him, not daring to touch the babe. 'Now, I'll prove to you that there's nothing wrong with his eyes.' She lighted a candle and passed it back and forth in front of the infant. 'Don't you see how his eyes follow the light?'

"It was some days after, the wife was up and her father and step-mother had come to see the child. The stepmother took the infant out of its cradle and weighed it, so to speak, in her arms. 'My, but he's a big boy!' she said, looking pleased. Then she noticed the child's head and remarked that it was uncommonly large.

"'The children in our family all have big heads,' said the man.

"'Is it a healthy infant?' the stepmother asked, as she put the child back into its crib.

"'Yes, indeed,' said the wife; 'and he grows bigger every day.'

"'Are you quite sure that the child can see?' asked the stepmother presently; 'for it turns its eyes in a way that shows too much white.'

"The wife began to tremble, and her lips quivered.

"'If you'd like to prove it with the candle-test,' said the man, 'you'll find that the child's sight is perfect.'

"The wife hastily lighted a candle, and held it before the baby's eyes. 'Of course he can see,' she said, trying to appear hopeful and happy. The child lay quite still, the whites of its eyes showing. 'Look how he turns his eyes to the light.' None of the others said anything. 'Don't you see that he moves them?' she said to the stepmother, but the latter made no reply. 'He's sleepy now, his eyes are closing.'

"In a while the stepmother asked what they were going to call him?

"'In this house the eldest son has always been called Ingmar,' the man informed her.

"'I had thought of asking you to let him be called Sven, after my father,' the wife put in.

"An awkward silence followed. The man observed that the wife was watching him attentively, although she appeared to be looking down at the floor. 'Your father, Sven Persson, is a clever man,' he said, 'but our son will have to be named Ingmar.'

"One night, when the child was about a week old, it was taken with convulsions, and died before morning.

The terrible part of it was that we never knew whether the child was normal or a defective."

Ingmar paused in his writing, and looked at his watch. It was then long past midnight.

"I'll have to hurry or it will be morning before I'm finished with this letter," he remarked to himself.

Then he wrote on:

"I want Your Reverence to know that of late the man has been kind to his wife, and at times he has shown her such little attentions as are common among young married folk. But all the while he thought of Gertrude as his only love, and said to himself: 'Of course I couldn't love Barbro, but I must be kind to her because her lot in life is such a sad one. I can't have her feel as if she were all alone in the world, when she has a husband to protect her.'

"Barbro did not grieve long for the child; in a fortnight she seemed quite reconciled to her loss.

"When summer came Barbro went up to the *säter* and her husband remained at home. And now, when he entered the house, a strange feeling came over him; he wandered from room to room looking for Barbro, and at times he would find himself listening for her voice. The home atmosphere was gone from the house; it did not seem like the same place.

"One Saturday evening he went up to the *säter* to see his wife. He found her sitting outside the cabin, her hands resting in her lap. Although she saw her husband coming she did not rise to meet him.

"'Barbro, a wonderful change has come over me,' he said, sitting down beside her.

"'Yes?' she returned, indifferently.

"'I'm beginning to love you, Barbro,' he told her.

"She looked at him wearily. 'It is too late now,' she said.

"It frightened him to see her like that. 'I don't think it's well for you to be all alone up here in this wilderness.'

"'I'm quite comfortable,' she replied, 'and wouldn't mind staying here all the time.'

"The man again tried to tell her that he now loved her and had no thoughts for any other, that he did not know how much she meant to him until she was gone from the home.

"'You should have said all that to me last autumn.'

"'My God!' he cried, 'don't tell me it's all over between us!'

"'Oh, no,' she answered, 'it hasn't come to that yet.'

"One day, toward the end of the summer, the man again went up to the *säter*. 'I have sad news for you,' he said to the wife.

"'What has happened?' she asked.

"'Your father is dead.'

"'That is well for both you and me.' Barbro sat down on a stone by the roadside and motioned to her husband to come sit beside her. 'Now that we are free and can do as we like, we are going to part.' He wanted to stop her, but she wouldn't let him say a word.

'So long as father lived this thing was out of the question, but now we must apply for a divorce at once—that you understand of course.'

"'No, I understand nothing of the kind,' replied the man.

"'You saw what sort of a child I bore you.'

"'It was a beautiful child,' said he.

"'It was blind,' she declared, 'and had it lived it would have been an imbecile.'

"'It doesn't matter what the child was, I want you.'

"Barbro clasped her hands, and her lips moved, as if in prayer.

"'Are you thanking God for that?' he asked her.

"'All the summer I have been praying for deliverance,' she said.

"'In God's name, am I to sacrifice my happiness just for an old myth?'

"'It is no myth,' said Barbro; 'the child was actually blind.'

"'How do you know?' he said. 'Had the child lived, I'm sure you would have found that its eyes were all right.'

"'In any case, my next child would be an idiot; for now I believe in that myth, as you call it.'

"The man tried to reason with her. 'But it isn't simply on account of the child I wish a separation,' she told him. 'I want you to go to Jerusalem and bring Gertrude back.'

"'Never in the world!' he exclaimed.

"'You must do it for my sake,' she pleaded, 'that I may again have peace of mind.' The man protested that what she asked of him was preposterous. 'But you've got to do it because it is right that you should,' said she. 'Can't you see that if we go on living as husband and wife God will continue to punish us?' She knew that he must at length give in for conscience sake. 'Be glad you can now right the wrong you did a year ago. Otherwise you would grieve about it all your life.' As he continued to protest, she said: 'Don't be anxious about the farm; you can buy it from me when you come back, and while you are away in Jerusalem I'll look after it for you.'

"Then they went back to the farm to arrange for the separation. Things were more difficult for him now than ever. It was as if Barbro were pleased at the thought of his going. She seemed to take keen delight in planning his and Gertrude's future, and pictured for him how happy Gertrude would be when he came to fetch her. Once, when she had gone on in this strain for a long while, he began to think that she must dislike him or she wouldn't talk so much about bringing him and Gertrude together. Then he sprang to his feet and brought his clenched hand down upon the table. 'I'll go!' he shouted. 'But for God's sake say no more!'

"'Then all will come right,' she said with a smile. 'Mind, Ingmar, I shall never know a moment's happiness until you have made up with Gertrude!'

"So they went through with the whole miserable

business; they were admonished by the pastor, and admonished by the church wardens, but at the Fall Sessions they were duly separated."

Ingmar laid down his pen. He had told the pastor everything; now he had only to add that he wanted him to talk with Barbro, and, above all, urge her not to insist upon his marrying Gertrude. Of course the pastor would understand that that was impossible. To go to Gertrude now and offer her a spurious love was but to deceive her a second time.

As that thought came to Ingmar, his eye fell upon some words he had just written. "You must do it for my sake, that I may again have peace of mind." He seemed to be back at the *säter*, listening to Barbro. "Be glad you can now right the wrong you did a year ago," he seemed to hear her say, and everything else she had said to him that time. "How can I think what she asks of me hard!" he mused. "It is little enough compared to what she has to bear." Suddenly it came over him that this letter must never get into Barbro's hands. "She mustn't know that this thing is hateful to me. I can't beg her thus pitifully to let me escape all punishment and penance. She never wavered for a second when a way was open to her to follow her own convictions, while I had to be made to see what was right."

Ingmar gathered up the written pages and put them in his pocket. "There's no need of my finishing this letter," he said.

He turned down the lamp and left the workshop. Though just as dejected and unhappy as before, he decided to do as his wife wished. Coming out, he found a little back gate standing open. It was already daylight. He stood drinking in the fresh air. "It isn't worth while going to bed," he thought. The sun now came rolling up from behind the hills, shedding a reddish glow over the rocks, and every second the landscape changed colour.

Presently Ingmar saw Gertrude coming down the slope below the Mount of Olives, and the sunbeams enveloped her in a golden mist. She looked radiant. It seemed to Ingmar as if the radiance emanated from herself. A tall man followed her at some distance; now and then he stopped and glanced round. It was plain he was guarding her.

Ingmar was not long recognizing the man. Then some things that had puzzled him the previous evening became clear. At that, his heart bounded with joy. "God is helping me," he said.

THE DERVISH

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ONE EVENING before dusk Gertrude was passing through a street in Jerusalem. Just in front of her walked a tall, spare man in a black flowing robe. She noticed that there was something unusual about the man, but what it was she could not quite make out. It was not his green turban, she thought, for men wearing that kind of headgear were to be seen every day in the streets of the Holy City. More likely it was because his head was unshaven and his hair was not drawn up under his turban, as is the custom among men of the East, but hung down upon his shoulders in long, even locks.

Gertrude, following the man, could not take her eyes from him; she wished he would turn round so that she could see his face. Just then a youth, in passing, saluted him with a reverent bow, and kissed his hand. The man in the black robe stood still for a moment, and glanced back at the youth who had greeted him so reverently; thus Gertrude's wish was gratified.

She stopped in breathless wonder and joy, and put her hand to her heart. "It is the Christ!" she thought. "It is the One who appeared to me at the brook in the forest."

The man continued on his way, now turning into a

crowded side street, where Gertrude soon lost sight of him.

She then took the road back to the colony, walking very slowly. Time after time she would stop, lean against a house-wall, and close her eyes. "If I could only keep this in my memory!" she murmured, "if I could only see his face before me always!"

She strove to imprint indelibly upon her memory every feature of the man's countenance. He had an oval face, his nose was long and straight, his forehead was broad, but not very high, his beard was dark, and cleft, and rather short. "He was exactly like the Christ as I have seen Him pictured, and looked the same as when I saw Him in the forest, only now He was even more beautiful and radiant. There was a wonderful light in His eyes, and great power. All things were centred in His eyes—love and wisdom, sorrow and compassion, and more besides. It seemed as if those eyes could look right into Heaven, and see God and the angels."

All the way home Gertrude was in ecstasy. Since the day the Christ had appeared to her in the wood she had never been so blissfully happy. She walked with hands clasped and eyes turned heavenward, as if she were no longer treading the earth, but floating on clouds of blue ether. To have seen Jesus here in Jerusalem seemed to her of far more significance than seeing Him in the wild, lonely forest that day in Dalecarlia. There He had appeared to her as in a vision; but, now that he had shown himself here, it meant that He had come

back to labour among men. This coming of the Christ was something so great that she could not at once grasp its full meaning; but peace and joy and bliss were the first evidences that a firm belief in this had brought her.

When she was nearly home she met Ingmar Ingmarsson in the road. He was still wearing his fine black clothes, which were so ill-suited to his plain features and his big, rough hands. He looked heavy and dejected. From the first moment Gertrude had seen Ingmar in Jerusalem she had wondered how she could once have cared so much about him. It seemed strange to her now that at home in Sweden she had thought him such a great man. Here in Jerusalem he only appeared awkward and out of place. She could not comprehend why people at home should have thought him so wonderful.

She had harboured no ill-feeling against Ingmar, but on the contrary had wanted to be friendly to him. But when she was told that he had separated from his wife and had come to Jerusalem to try to win her, Gertrude, back again, she was afraid even to speak to him. "I must show him that I have ceased to care. It will never do to let him think for a moment that I could be persuaded. He has probably come because he feels that he treated me badly; but when he sees that I no longer love him he will soon come to his senses, and go home again."

But now, on meeting Ingmar outside the colony, her only thought was that here was someone to whom

she could confide her wonderful experience. She rushed up to him crying: "I have seen Jesus."

So joyful a cry had surely not been heard on these barren fields and hills around Jerusalem since the time the pious women returning from the empty tomb cried to the Apostles, *The Lord is Risen!*

Ingmar stood looking down, as was his habit when wishing to conceal his thoughts. "Oh, have you?" he said.

Gertrude grew impatient—just as in the old days, when Ingmar had been slow to enter into her dreams and vagaries. She only wished it had been Bo, instead, for he would have understood her. Nevertheless she began to relate what she had seen.

Ingmar did not betray by word or look that he had his doubts, but Gertrude felt, somehow, when telling him of her experience that there was nothing much to it. She had seen a man in the street who looked like Christ, as He has been pictured—that was all. Now it seemed just like a dream. At the time it had been marvellously real to her; but when she tried to tell about it, it was all so vague.

At all events Ingmar was glad she had spoken to him. He questioned her minutely as to the hour and place she had met the man, and as to his dress and general appearance.

The moment they reached the colony Gertrude left Ingmar. She felt terribly tired and downcast. "I can see now that our Lord did not want me to speak

of this," she thought. "Ah, I was so happy while I alone knew of it!"

She resolved to say no more about this to anyone, and to ask Ingmar to be silent. "It is true," she told herself, "it is true that I have met the One I saw in the forest. But it is perhaps too much to expect others to believe."

A few days later Gertrude was much surprised when Ingmar came and told her that he too had seen the man in the black robe.

"Ever since you told me about him, I have walked up and down that street, on the watch for him."

"Ah, then you did believe me after all!" said Gertrude, the fire of faith kindling afresh within her.

"You know that I've never been quick to believe things," Ingmar replied.

"Have you ever seen a face so radiant?" asked Gertrude.

"No," said Ingmar, "I've never before seen a face like his."

"Don't you see it before you wherever you are?"

"I must confess I do."

"Then don't you believe that he is the Christ?"

Ingmar evaded the question. "It is for him to show us what he is."

"If I could only see Him again!" sighed Gertrude.

Ingmar seemed to hesitate for a moment; then he said rather lightly: "I know where he holds forth this evening."

Gertrude was all eagerness. "Oh, Ingmar! do you really know where He is? Then you must take me there, so that I may see Him again."

"But it's pitch dark," Ingmar protested. "I don't think it would be safe to go to the city at this late hour."

"It's quite safe," she assured him. "I've gone there much later to visit the sick." Gertrude had some difficulty persuading him. "You must think me out of my senses, that's why you don't want to take me," she said, and her eyes grew dark and wild-looking.

"It was stupid of me to tell you that I'd found him," said Ingmar, "but I think now I'd better accompany you."

Gertrude was elated, and wept for very joy. "We must try to slip away from the colony without anyone seeing us. I don't want to tell any of the brethren about it until I have seen Him again."

She managed to find a lantern, and they were soon on their way to the city. It was a stormy night; the rain and the wind beat against them, but Gertrude did not mind. "Are you quite sure that I shall see him to-night?" she asked, time after time.

Gertrude talked to Ingmar all the while as if nothing had ever come between him and her. She gave him her full confidence, just as in the old days, telling him of the many mornings she had been up on the Mount of Olives to watch for the coming of the Christ; of how people had embarrassed her by standing around staring at her as if they thought she were mad. "I knew that He would

come, you see, and that's why I went there to watch for Him. I would rather He had come in all His majesty and glory—on the clouds of the morning, but it doesn't matter now He is here that He chose to come on a dark winter night. The darkness will flee once He reveals Himself. And to think of your coming here, Ingmar, just at the time when He has appeared again to work His wonders among men! You are fortunate, for you haven't had to go about day after day, anxiously waiting. You have come at just the right time."

Gertrude stood still and held up the lantern, so that she could see Ingmar's face. He looked troubled and worn. "Why, Ingmar, how old you have grown in a year! I can see what you've suffered on my account. Now you mustn't think any more of what is past. It was God's will things should go as they did. It was His great mercy toward you and toward me. And now He has brought us to His Holy City, that we might be here at the great appointed time. Father and mother will also be glad when they see God's purpose in this," she went on. "They have never written me an unkind word for my desertion of them; they knew that it would have been too hard for me at home. I know they felt rather bitter toward you; but now they will be reconciled with the two children who grew up in their home. I almost believe they have grieved more for you than for me."

Ingmar walked quietly by her side in all the drenching rain; he did not respond even to her last remark.

"Perhaps he doesn't believe that I have found the Christ," thought Gertrude; "but what of it as long as he is taking me to Him? I shall soon see all the people and princes of this earth bow the knee before Him who is their Saviour."

Ingmar took Gertrude to the Mohammedan quarter of the city. They passed through many dark and tortuous streets, and at last stopped in front of a low gate in a high, windowless wall. Ingmar pushed the gate open, and they went down a long, dim passageway and came into a lighted courtyard.

A number of servants were at their work, and on a stone seat near a wall sat two old men with their legs drawn up under them; but none took any notice of Ingmar and Gertrude. They seated themselves on another wall bench, and Gertrude began to look about her.

This courtyard was like many another she had seen in Jerusalem. On all four sides were covered colonnades and over the open space at the centre was stretched a big, dirty awning that hung in tatters.

The place must once have been a fine and imposing structure, though it was now crumbling in ruins. The pillars looked as if they had been taken from a church. Once upon a time they doubtless had beautifully carved capitals, but now all the carvings were either broken off or defaced. The plaster on the walls was cracked and broken, and the many holes and cracks were stuffed with dirty rags. Over against one wall was piled a lot of old boxes and hen-coops.

Gertrude whispered to Ingmar: "Are you quite sure it is here I shall see Him?"

Ingmar nodded assent. Pointing to a score of small sheepskin rugs arranged in a circle at the centre of the court, he said: "It was there I saw him yesterday with his disciples."

Gertrude looked a bit crestfallen, but was soon smiling again. "Strange it must always be thus!" she said. "One expects Him to appear with glory and honour, though He cares nothing for such things. He comes in lowliness and poverty. You understand, of course, that I'm not like the Jews, who wouldn't accept Him because He did not appear as the Prince and Ruler of this world."

Presently some men came in from the street. They went very slowly to the middle of the courtyard and sat down on the small sheepskin rugs. All the men wore Eastern garb, but in other respects they differed greatly. Some were young, some old; a few were attired in silks and costly furs; others were dressed as poor water-carriers and humble tillers of the soil. As they came in, Gertrude attached names to them.

"See, Ingmar! there is Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night," she said, pointing to a distinguished looking elderly man. "The one with the big beard is Peter, and over there sits Joseph of Arimathea. It has never been so clear to me before how the disciples of Jesus gathered about him. The young man with eyes downcast is John, and the red-haired one in the felt cap is

Judas. The two sitting cross-legged on the stone-seat smoking narghiles, are scribes. They don't believe in Him, and have only come from curiosity or to dispute with Him."

While Gertrude was talking all the places in the circle were filled and the man whom she was expecting had come in and taken his place at the centre.

She had not noticed from where he came, and could hardly repress a cry when she suddenly caught sight of him. "Yes, it is He!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands. She sat gazing at the man in rapt wonder, as he stood there with eyes closed, as if in prayer, and the longer she looked at him the stronger grew her faith. "Don't you see, Ingmar, that he is not a mortal?" she said in a whisper.

Ingmar replied, likewise in a whisper: "Yesterday, when I first saw him, I too thought him something more than human."

"Only to look upon Him fills me with bliss," said Gertrude. "There is nothing He could ask of me that I would not do for Him!"

The man she believed to be the Christ now stood there with all the dignity of authority. He raised his hand a little, and instantly all who were seated on the ground intoned in a loud voice: *Allah! Allah!* at the same time jerking their heads from side to side. They did it over and over again, with each jerk crying: *Allah! Allah!* The man stood almost motionless, merely marking the time by a slight movement of the head.

"What is this?" asked Gertrude.

"You have been in Jerusalem longer than I," said Ingmar, "and must know more about such things than I do."

"I have heard about a sect called dancing dervishes," Gertrude replied; "this must be their service. It is perhaps the custom in this country to open a meeting in this way, just as we begin ours with a hymn. When this is over, He will surely begin to expound His teaching. How I long to hear His voice!"

The men seated on the ground about him continued to cry *Allah! Allah!* while jerking their heads from side to side, and their movements grew more rapid and violent. Big drops of sweat now stood on their foreheads and their Allah-cries sounded alike the death-rattle.

When they had kept this up uninterruptedly for several minutes, their leader made a little movement with his hand, at which they immediately stopped.

Gertrude sat looking down, so as not to see them torment themselves. When there was silence, she looked up at Ingmar and said: "Now He will begin to speak. How fortunate for those who can understand His preaching! But I shall be satisfied with only listening to His voice."

The silence lasted but a moment. Presently the leader gave a signal, at which his followers again began to shout *Allah! Allah!* This time they not only moved their heads, but the upper part of their bodies. The man with the strong face and the beautiful Christ-like eyes

only urged on his followers to greater and more violent action. He allowed them to go on like that minute after minute. As though impelled by a power outside themselves, they kept it up much longer than one would have thought the human body could stand. It was terrible to watch these men, who looked half-dead from their exertions, and to hear the hoarse cries that came from their parched throats.

There was a short pause, followed by more groans and contortions, then came another pause.

"Those fellows must have had a lot of practice," said Ingmar, "to be able to keep it up like this."

Gertrude turned to Ingmar with an appealing look, her lips quivering. "Do you think He will ever stop them?" she asked. Then, on looking again at the commanding figure standing in the midst of his disciples new hope sprang up in her. "The sick and the sorrowing will soon come seeking Him," she said with fervour. "We shall see Him heal the lepers and give sight to the blind."

But the dervish continued as he had begun. He made a sign, and in a second the men were on their feet. And now their movement became even more violent. They stood, each on his own rug, while their poor bodies rocked and swayed with the utmost abandon. Their eyes, now dull and bloodshot, had a fixed stare about them. Several of the men seemed unconscious of where they were. Their bodies moved, as if automatically, to and fro, from side to side, up and down, faster and faster.

Finally, when they had been sitting there fully two hours, Gertrude, in dismay, seized hold of Ingmar's arm. "Has he nothing but this to teach them?" she whispered. It had begun to dawn on her that the man whom she had believed to be the Christ had nothing else to give in the way of teaching than these weird practices. All he did was to excite and urge on these poor madmen. When one of them moved faster and more continuously than the rest, he would place him inside the ring, and let him stand there salaaming and groaning, as an example to the others. And he himself began to twist and writhe, as if unable to hold still any longer.

Gertrude tried to choke back her rising tears. All her dreams and hopes were shattered. "Has he nothing else to teach them?" she asked once more.

As if in answer to her query, the dervish motioned to some attendants who hitherto had taken no part in the service, and who quickly seized upon some instruments that hung on a pillar—drums and tambourines—and began to play them. With the beating of the drums and tambourines, the Allah-cries grew wilder and more shrill, and the men's contortions increasingly violent. Several of the dervishes tore off their fezzes and turbans and loosened their long hair. They looked frightful as they whirled and swayed, their hair now tumbling down over their faces, now flying at their backs. Their eyes grew more and more fixed, their faces more like dead men's faces; their movements became spasmodic

convulsions. They even frothed at the mouth, as does a man in a fit.

Gertrude stood up. Her joy and ecstasy were gone, her last hope dead. There remained to her only a feeling of unspeakable loathing. She walked toward the gate without even looking back at the man whom she had imagined was the God-sent Saviour.

"It is sad about this land," said Ingmar, when they were in the street again. "Think what prophets and teachers they had here in olden times!—and in our day a man goes about in this holy place whose teaching is nothing more than making his disciples behave like lunatics."

Gertrude did not speak; she hastened homeward as fast as she could. When they reached the colony, she lifted her lantern. "Did you see him like that yesterday?" she asked, looking into Ingmar's face with eyes flashing with anger.

"Yes," he replied without the least hesitation.

"Couldn't you bear to see me happy?" said Gertrude; "was that why you took me to see him there? I'll never forgive you for this," she added.

"I understand how you must feel about it," said Ingmar, "but I did what I thought was best for you."

They stole quietly in by the back door. "Now you can sleep peacefully," Gertrude said, bitterly. "For you have done your work well. I no longer think that man the Christ, and I'm not crazy any more. Oh, yes, you've done your work well!" Ingmar went up the stair-

way leading to the men's dormitory, Gertrude following. "Mind! I shall never forgive you for this," she reiterated.

Whereupon she went to her own room, threw herself on the bed, and cried herself to sleep. In the morning she wakened early, as usual, but did not arise. She wondered at herself. "What is the matter with me? Why don't I get up? How does it happen that I have no desire to go to the Mount of Olives?"

She put her hands to her eyes, and burst into tears again. "My hope is gone!" she sobbed. "I no longer expect Him. It hurt too much yesterday when I saw how I had been deluding myself. I dare not expect Him now; I don't believe He will ever come."

For a whole week Gertrude did not go near the Mount of Olives. Then, one morning the old longing and belief awoke anew in her and she quietly stole out and went thither again, and all was as it had been before.

When the colonists had gathered in the large room in the evening, as was their wont, Ingmar saw Gertrude sitting beside Bo, to whom she talked long and earnestly.

After a while Bo arose and went up to Ingmar. "Gertrude has just been telling me what you did for her the other evening."

"Has she?" said Ingmar, not comprehending to what he referred.

"I want you to know that I understand you did it to save her reason."

"Surely it is not so serious as all that?"

"Yes," said Bo; "one who has lived in the shadow of this threatening doom for more than a year knows how serious it is."

As Bo turned to go, Ingmar suddenly put out his hand.

"Let me say to you that there is no one here I would rather be friends with than with you," he said.

Bo smiled. "I'm afraid the ice would hardly be broken before we were at outs again." But just the same he gave Ingmar a hearty handclasp.

A TIME OF STRESS

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INGMAR INGMARSSON had been in Jerusalem about two months, when he happened one day to be standing down by the Jaffa gate. The weather was uncommonly fine and there were many people out; Ingmar took keen delight in watching the motley throngs that passed in and out through the gateway.

He had not stood there long, however, before he found himself back in the thoughts which now filled his mind continually. "If I could only persuade Gertrude to leave the colony!" he said to himself, "but it seems quite impossible."

Ingmar realized that he could not let Gertrude remain in Jerusalem, but must take her back with him, if he hoped ever again to have peace of mind. "If she were only well out of this dreadful land, where there are so many hard, cruel people and so many queer visionaries and fanatics! To get her back to Dalecarlia is my sole concern now. Whether I love her or she loves me doesn't matter; it's my duty to take her home to her parents.

"Things don't appear to be going as well with the colony now as when I arrived. Hard times have struck it; and that seems reason enough for Gertrude to go home. I can't understand why the colonists have become so poor all at once; they seem to be entirely with-

out funds. Not one of them can afford to buy even an orange at a fruit-stall, and at meal-times they hardly eat enough to sustain them."

Ingmar had observed of late that Gertrude was beginning to care for Bo, and thought that perhaps she might marry him if they were only in Sweden. This Ingmar felt would be the greatest happiness that he could now hope for. "I fear there's no chance of my winning Barbro back, but I shall be satisfied so long as I don't have to marry another; if I can't have Barbro, I'd rather go through life alone." He quickly put these thoughts out of his mind, and took himself severely to task. "You mustn't imagine this thing or that, but devise a way to get Gertrude home."

As Ingmar stood musing he saw one of the Gordon colonists, an American named Clifford, come out from the American Consulate, accompanied by the Consul himself. "This looks a bit queer," thought Ingmar, for he had learned through various sources that the Consul continually sought to create trouble for the colonists, and that he had always felt a strong antipathy for them. Apparently these two Americans were on most friendly terms.

"Then you think it will be quite safe to do it to-morrow morning?" said the Consul under his breath.

"Yes," replied Clifford. "You see it will have to be done before Mrs. Gordon gets back."

"Don't lose your nerve," said the Consul; "whatever happens, I'll take care of you."

At that moment the Consul caught sight of Ingmar. "Isn't that one of them?" he asked in a low voice. Alarmed, Clifford looked round, but felt reassured on seeing it was only Ingmar. "Oh, that's the newcomer who goes about all day looking as if he were asleep," he said, not even taking the trouble to lower his voice. "I don't think the fellow understands English."

The Consul appeared relieved, and, bidding Clifford good-bye, he said: "To-morrow we'll be rid of the whole gang."

Clifford grunted assent, though he looked less confident now. He stood watching the retreating figure of the Consul for a moment, and then went on his way. Ingmar, motionless with amazement, lingered a while. That which he had just overheard made him feel very uneasy.

"Clifford was right about my ignorance of English, but I understand enough to know that he's up to some deviltry. He means to make trouble for the colonists while Mrs. Gordon is down at Jaffa. I wonder what he plans to do? The Consul looked as pleased as if his long cherished wish to break up the colony were an accomplished fact.

"From what I can gather, Clifford has long been dissatisfied with the management of the colony," he reflected. "I've heard that in the beginning he was one of the most zealous of the brethren; but of late his zeal seems to have cooled considerably. Who knows? —perhaps he is in love with one of the sisters and means

to get her by hook or crook. Or maybe he thinks the colony can't hold out much longer anyway for lack of funds, and might as well be broken up one time as another. Very likely he has become discouraged at the way things are going. I believe he has been trying for some time to make the others discontented. I once heard him remark that Miss Young was better dressed than any of the other sisters, and another time he declared they had better food at Mrs. Gordon's table than was served at the other tables. Lord preserve us!" thought Ingmar, stepping out into the road. "He's a dangerous fellow, this Clifford. I'd better hurry home at once and warn the people."

But in a moment he went back to where he had been standing at the gate. "You, Ingmar, should be the last person to tell the colonists of this. You just let that fellow alone; it will make matters all the easier for you. You've been wondering how Gertrude could be made to leave the colony, now it will come about of itself. Evidently both Clifford and the Consul are bent upon driving the Gordonites out of Jerusalem. I hope to goodness the colony will be broken up! In that event Gertrude would be glad enough to go back to Dalecarlia with me."

At the thought that he might soon be going home Ingmar felt as if he could hardly wait the day out. "By rights I should now be at work in the old forest, cutting timber. I can feel the muscles of my arm tighten, and my fingers ache to get hold of an axe. I can't compre-

hend how the Swedes here have been able to stand it so long without any work in field or forest. If Tims Halvor had had a kiln to tend or an acre to plow I'm sure he would have been alive to-day."

Ingmar could scarcely contain himself for eagerness and longing. He went through the gateway and down the road leading across the Valley of Hinnom. Time and again, with ever increasing conviction, the thought recurred to him that Gertrude would marry Bo could he but take them back to Sweden. Perhaps Karin too would come, and once more be the mistress of Ingmar Farm. That arrangement would be the most natural one, he reasoned, for then Karin's son would some day inherit the property.

"Even if Barbro should decide to go back to her father's parish, she wouldn't be so very far away but that I could see her sometimes," he mused, continuing to make plans for the future. "I can go to her church every Sunday, if I like, and now and then we might meet at a wedding or a funeral, and at the feast I could arrange to sit next to her at table, so that I could talk with her. We can be friends even if we are divorced."

He felt it was not right for him to be pleased at the prospect of the colony breaking up, but he tried to justify his attitude to himself. "No one could live among the colonists as long as I have without knowing what good people they are," he thought, "yet who could wish for a continuation of existing conditions? Think how many of their people have died within the year! And think of

all the persecution they have had to endure! And now poverty has come upon them. With starvation threatening them, how can one help wishing they would disband?"

While these thoughts were running through his mind, he was walking toward the colony. He had passed the Valley of Hinnom and taken the road leading to the Mountain of Evil Counsel, where modern palaces stand side by side with ancient ruins. Ingmar passed these without thinking of where he was. Sometimes he would stop, and then go on, as one does when deep in thought.

He presently found himself standing under a tree. It was rather high and unlike other trees in that its branches were all on one side of the stem and did not grow upward, but were twisted and closely intertwined, forming a network of branches that pointed straight toward the east.

When Ingmar finally saw what tree it was he gave a start. "It is the Judas-tree!" he gasped. "It was here the betrayer hanged himself. How strange that I should have strayed hitherward!"

He continued to look up at the tree. "I wonder if our Lord has brought me here to show me that I'm a traitor to the colony? What if it be God's will that this colony shall continue to exist?"

Ingmar's mind now worked heavily and slowly, and the thoughts that came to him were bitter and painful. "Justify yourself as you will, you do wrong not to warn the colonists when you know there is a conspiracy against

them. It looks as if you thought our Lord did not know what He was about when He brought your nearest and dearest to this strange land. Even though you cannot divine His purpose in this, you certainly understand it was never meant that the good work should be carried on only for a year or two. It may be that God looked down upon Jerusalem, and, seeing all the strife and discord that raged in the city, thought: "Behold, even here will I establish a sanctuary, where unity shall prevail, a house of concord and peace will I raise up in this place."

Ingmar stood under the Judas-tree battling with his thoughts, which clashed like opposing warriors in a desperate fight. He still clung to the hope that he would soon be going home, and strove hard to keep it. The sun went down and darkness quickly followed in its wake, but Ingmar remained standing under the tree debating with himself.

At last he folded his hands, and prayed: "O God, help me to walk in Thy ways!"

Ingmar had no sooner breathed these words, than a wonderful sense of peace came to him. At the same time he felt that his own will had been subdued, and that he was now being moved by a will outside himself. It was as if someone had taken him by the hand and was leading him. "It is God leading me," he thought.

He went down the Mountain of Evil Counsel, across the Valley of Hinnom, and past Jerusalem. His sole thought now was to go back to the colony and tell the

authorities there what he had discovered. When he came to the place where the road to Jaffa branches off he heard the tramp of horses behind him. Turning round, he saw a dragoman whom he had often seen at the colony coming up with a pair of horses, one of which he rode while leading the other by the bridle.

"Where are you going?" Ingmar shouted, hailing the dragoman.

"I'm on my way to Jaffa," said the man.

"That's where I want to go." It suddenly flashed into his mind that he must avail himself of this opportunity and go straight to Mrs. Gordon, rather than to the colony.

After some parley, the dragoman told him he might ride the other horse. It was a fine animal. Ingmar congratulated himself upon his happy thought. "I can surely cover the thirty odd miles to Jaffa to-night," he mused, "in which case Mrs. Gordon can be back at the colony by to-morrow afternoon." Ingmar had not been riding more than an hour when his horse went lame. On dismounting, he found that it had lost a shoe. "What's to be done now?" he asked the dragoman.

"The only thing is for me to go back to Jerusalem and get it shod," replied the man.

And there stood Ingmar in the middle of the road at a loss what to do. Suddenly he decided to continue the journey to Jaffa on foot. He did not ask himself what was the best thing to do; the power that was guid-

ing him urged him onward. He could not think of turning back.

Ingmar set off to walk, covering the ground quickly with his long, steady strides. When he had been walking for some little time, he began to feel uneasy. "How am I to find out whereabouts in Jaffa Mrs. Gordon is staying?" he wondered. "It was all very well so long as the dragoman was with me. Now I shall have to go from house to house to inquire for her." But he pushed on resolutely despite his uneasiness.

He walked along a good broad highway, where he could easily have made his way even on a dark night. A little later, when the moon rose, the hills round which the road wound its way became visible on all sides.

As soon as Ingmar had put one hill behind him, another confronted him. He had moments of great weariness, but the strange power that seemed to be guiding him drove him forward. There was no time to stop and rest.

Thus Ingmar continued hour after hour. He had no idea as to how far he had come, but he was still among the hills. Whenever he reached the top of a ridge he thought: "I must surely be near enough now to see the Plain of Sharon and the sea beyond it"; but all he saw was range upon range of hills. He looked at his watch. It was close upon midnight. "Heavenly Father, is it that late!" he exclaimed, "and I'm still tramping Judæa's mountains."

He grew more and more concerned, and all at once

set off to run. He panted for breath, his temples throbbed, and his heart beat violently. "I can't keep this up much longer," he thought, but just the same he went on running.

He rushed down a steep slope at full speed. The road lay before him in the moonlight, straight and smooth, and no thought of danger entered his mind. At the bottom lay a dark gully, but on he ran until he suddenly stumbled and fell.

Instantly he was on his feet again; but now his knee hurt him so that he could hardly walk. "I'll soon be all right," he thought, and sat down by the roadside to rest. It was almost impossible for him to sit still even long enough to regain his breath. "I can feel that I'm not my own master," he said. "Something seems to be pulling and dragging me on toward Jaffa."

Again he got up. His knee still pained him badly; he walked on, ignoring the pain, but presently found himself lying flat in the road. "I'm all used up," he said, as if talking to the power that was urging him on. "In God's name find a way to help me!"

As Ingmar said this he heard in the distance the rumbling noise of wheels, as if a wagon were approaching with incredible swiftness. Almost in the same moment that he heard it afar it sounded as if quite close upon him. He could hear a horse come tearing down the hillside at a wild gallop. Above the rumble of wheels and the clatter of hoofs he distinguished the incessant cracking of a whip and the shouts of the driver.

He was not long getting up and hobbling to the side of the road, to escape being run over.

In a twinkling the driver reached the bottom of the long slope down which Ingmar had but just come. The vehicle was an ordinary green-painted cart, the kind that is used in West Dalecarlia. "Humph! there's something queer about this," thought Ingmar. "I hardly think there are any carts of this kind to be found in Palestine." The driver appeared even more strange to the place. He, too, was evidently from the old country, and looked like a real Dalecarlian, with his small round black hat and his bobbed hair. Moreover, he had removed his coat, showing his green homespun waistcoat with red sleeves. That outfit hailed from Dalecarlia, there was no mistaking it. About the horse, too, there was something peculiar. It was a fine big animal with a glossy black coat that was so well groomed it fairly shone. The man drove standing up, and was bending far over the horse, cracking his whip over its head to make it go faster. The horse did not appear to feel the lashing, nor did it seem to be any strain upon it to travel at such a pace; it pranced down the road as if the whole thing were a frolic. When the driver came alongside of Ingmar he pulled up with a jerk. "I'll give you a lift, if you like," he said. Anxious as Ingmar was to get to Jaffa, he did not feel especially eager to accept the offer. He felt that there was something weird about it all. And besides, that driver had a hideous face, covered with scars, as if he had been in

many a fight; over one eyebrow there was a fresh knife-cut. "No doubt I drive faster than you are accustomed to travelling," said the man, "but I supposed you were in a hurry."

"Is your horse safe?" asked Ingmar.

"Oh, he's safe enough; he is blind."

Ingmar shook from head to foot. Suddenly the driver leaned over the side of the wagon and looked him in the face.

"You come along with me," he said; "there's nothing to be feared. I think you can guess who sent me."

When the man said that Ingmar's courage returned; he climbed into the cart, and they drove off at a mad pace toward the Plain of Sharon.

Mrs. Gordon had gone to Jaffa to nurse a sick friend—the wife of a missionary, who had always been friendly to the colonists, and had helped them in many ways.

The night Ingmar Ingmarsson was on his way to Jaffa Mrs. Gordon sat up with her patient till after midnight, when she was relieved of her charge. Coming out from the sick-room, she noticed how clear the night was in that beautiful silvery-white moonlight which one sees only near the coast. She stepped out onto the balcony overlooking the big orange-groves and the old town, towering on its steep rock cliff, and the shining waters of the Mediterranean.

The house where Mrs. Gordon was stopping was not

in the city itself, but in the German colony, which lay on a little hill outside the town. Below her balcony stretched the broad highroad that runs straight through the colony. In the white moonlight she could see quite a distance down the road, and distinguish the houses and gardens on either side.

She saw a man coming up the road very slowly, and as if uncertain of his way. He was a tall man, and the moonlight made him appear taller than he actually was. To Mrs. Gordon he looked a giant. He paused before each house and glanced up inquiringly. Mrs. Gordon somehow had the feeling that there was something uncanny about the man—as if he were a wandering ghost trying to find a house where he could appear and frighten the poor inmates out of their wits.

At last the man came up to the house where Mrs. Gordon was. He viewed it more carefully than he had the others, walked all around it, rapped on the window shutters and tried the door. Mrs. Gordon leaned over the balcony railing to see what he would do next, when the man suddenly caught sight of her.

"Mrs. Gordon," he said in a low, cautious tone of voice, "I should like to have a word with you." As he bent his head back to look up at her, she saw that it was Ingmar Ingmarsson. "First of all I must tell you that I have come here entirely on my own responsibility, and without the knowledge of the brethren."

"Has anything happened at home?" asked Mrs. Gordon.

"No," replied Ingmar, "not as yet; but it would be well, I think, if you went back."

"I shall come to-morrow," she told him.

Ingmar thought a moment, and then he said, almost in a whisper: "You'd better return to-night."

Mrs. Gordon felt somewhat annoyed at the man. Why should she rouse the whole household in order to get away at once? she asked herself. "If I could only find out what the difficulty is," she thought, and began to question him as to whether anyone had been taken ill or whether the brethren were in need of money. Instead of replying, Ingmar turned on his heel.

"Are you going already?" said Mrs. Gordon.

"You have been warned," Ingmar answered, without looking back; "now do as you please."

Then Mrs. Gordon began to apprehend there was something serious afoot, and quickly reached a decision. "Wait a moment!" she called to him, "and you can drive back with me."

"No, thank you," he returned. "I have a better conveyance, I think, than you can offer me."

Mrs. Gordon's host let her have a pair of fast horses and a light carriage. She drove at a furious pace across the Plain of Sharon and over the hills toward the Judæan mountains, and by daybreak she was driving down the long slope above the old robbers' haunt, *Ab Gosch*. "It was stupid of me to pay any heed to that peasant, who knows nothing about our affairs," she thought now, and felt tempted to turn and drive back to Jaffa.

She had just cleared a long stretch of hills and was passing through a gully, when she descried a man sitting at the roadside. As the team approached, the man looked up, and she saw that it was Ingmar Ingmarsson.

"How could he have got this far so soon?" she wondered, and pulling up sharply, she called to him.

Ingmar, overjoyed at hearing her voice, rose at once. "Are you going back to the colony, Mrs. Gordon?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Good!" said Ingmar. "I was on my way to Jaffa to fetch you, when I fell and hurt my knee, and here I've been sitting the whole night."

Mrs. Gordon was astounded. "Were you not at Jaffa in the night, Ingmar Ingmarsson?"

"No—only in my dreams. Whenever I dozed a little I seemed to be walking up and down the streets of Jaffa searching for you." Mrs. Gordon grew very thoughtful, and did not speak for some moments. Her silence made Ingmar feel rather awkward. He asked timidly: "Would you let me ride back with you? I'm not able to walk."

In no time Mrs. Gordon was out of the carriage helping him into it, then she stopped in the middle of the road. "This thing seems incredible," she murmured.

Ingmar had to arouse her as it were for the second time. "Mrs. Gordon, I think you'd better drive home as quickly as possible," he said, at which she got back into the carriage and they drove on in silence. Ingmar

spoke first. "Please pardon me for disturbing you, Mrs. Gordon," he said, "but there's something I must tell you.

"Yesterday I overheard Clifford talking to the American Consul. He is up to some mischief, and intends to act while you are away."

"What is this you are telling me?" Mrs. Gordon exclaimed.

"He means, if he can, to break up the colony."

Mrs. Gordon was at last thoroughly aroused, and asked Ingmar to tell her all that he had heard. When he had done so, she sat for some time deep in thought. Suddenly she looked at him and said: "I'm very glad, Ingmar Ingmarsson, that you have the welfare of the colony so much at heart."

Ingmar went red in the face. "How do you know I'm a friend to the colony?"

"I know it because you were in Jaffa last night, and bade me hurry home." She told him of his appearing to her in the night, and what he had said. Ingmar thought it the most remarkable thing he had ever heard.

"If I'm not mistaken," said Mrs. Gordon, "before this day is over we shall have seen still greater things, for now I feel that God is protecting us." She then spoke to Ingmar as if no peril were threatening her people. "Now tell me if anything special has happened at home since I left."

Ingmar hesitated, and then began to apologize for his poor English.

"Oh, I understand you quite well," she assured him.

"On the whole things have been going about as usual," he said.

"But surely you must have something to relate."

"Well, there's the matter of Baram Pasha's mill—but perhaps you've already heard about it?"

"I didn't even know Baram Pasha had a mill," replied Mrs. Gordon.

"Oh, yes," said Ingmar. "It seems that soon after he had become Governor of Jerusalem he found that the people had nothing but hand-mills for the grinding of their corn; so he put up a steam-mill in one of the valleys hereabout. It isn't surprising that you have never heard about the mill, for it has seldom been in use. Baram Pasha has never been able to get good hands to run it. A few days ago he sent to find out if some of the colonists would not start the mill for him. A couple of us went down there and put it to rights."

"That is good news," said Mrs. Gordon. "I'm glad we could do Baram Pasha a service."

"He was so pleased at this that he offered to let the colonists have the mill rent free if they would take charge of it. And he told them that they could have all the profits if they would only keep it going."

"Well," said Mrs. Gordon, turning quite around to him, "what did our people say to that?"

"The only thing they could say was that they would be glad to work the mill for him, but would take no pay for their labour."

"That was quite right," said Mrs. Gordon.

"I'm not so certain as to its being quite right, for now Baram Pasha won't let them have the mill. He says he couldn't think of turning it over to them if they are unwilling to take pay for their labour; that it would never do to let the people here get into the way of expecting everything for nothing. If he allowed that, others who have mills or sell flour would complain of him to the Sultan."

Mrs. Gordon was silent.

"So nothing came of it," Ingmar told her. "Had your colonists accepted the offer, they might at least have earned enough at the mill to pay for their daily bread, and besides, it would have been a great blessing to the people to have had the mill going. But that was not to be thought of."

Nor did Mrs. Gordon reply to this. "Has nothing else happened?" she asked, to make Ingmar change the subject.

"Oh, yes," he replied; "there's the matter of Miss Young and the school. Haven't you heard about it?"

"No."

"Well," said Ingmar, "the other day Aschmed Effendi, the superintendent of the Mohammedan schools in Jerusalem, came to us and said: 'We have in the city a large school for girls where several hundred children spend their time fighting and shrieking. The noises that assail the ears of passers-by are worse than the roar of the Mediterranean in the harbour of Jaffa. Whether the

teachers themselves can read and write I don't know, but I know that they are not teaching the children anything. I cannot go to the school myself, nor can I send another man to establish order there, as it is contrary to the rules of our religion for a man to set foot in a girls' school. My only hope for that school would be to have Miss Young manage it. I know that she is well educated, and can speak Arabic. As to her salary, she can have whatever she asks if she will only take charge of the school.'"

"What was the outcome of this?" asked Mrs. Gordon.

"The same as with the mill," said Ingmar. "Miss Young was quite willing to take over the school, but she would not accept any salary. Then Aschmed Effendi answered: 'It is my custom to pay those who work for me, and I cannot accept favours.' But Miss Young was deaf to all reason; so he had to leave with the object of his visit unaccomplished. He was highly offended, and in a burst of indignation told Miss Young the responsibility was hers if all these poor children grew up undisciplined and untaught."

It was some time before Mrs. Gordon replied. "I can see, Ingmar Ingmarsson," she said presently, "that you think we acted unwisely in these instances. It is always well to hear the views of a practical man, and therefore I wish you would tell me what you think about our way of living."

Ingmar sat a long moment considering. Mrs. Gordon was a person of such great dignity that it was not an easy

matter for him to criticise her methods. He said at length: "I don't see why the colonists need live in such poverty."

"How can we consistently do otherwise?" said Mrs. Gordon with a smile.

Ingmar was even longer replying to this. "If you allowed your people to accept pay for their labour," he said, "they wouldn't get into such straits as they do now."

Mrs. Gordon turned to him in amazement: "For fully sixteen years I have conducted the affairs of the colony in a way that has made it possible for us to dwell together in concord and brotherly love; therefore it seems to me that a newcomer like you would hardly understand the conditions here well enough to warrant your suggesting any radical changes."

"Now, I've offended you," said Ingmar; "but it was you yourself made me talk."

"Oh, I understand how you meant it. For your information I must say that we have still considerable capital to draw upon. But lately some one has been sending false reports about us to our bankers in America and, as a result, we have not received any remittances for several months. However, I know that we will soon have enough for our needs."

"I'm glad to know that," Ingmar replied. "At home with us we hold that it is better for people to live by their own work than upon the savings of others." Ingmar felt that he had said quite enough.

Mrs. Gordon reached the colony at an early hour. During the latter part of the drive she had felt uneasy, and wondered what she would have to meet upon her arrival. When she came within sight of the house, and saw that everything thereabout was apparently as usual, she gave a sigh of relief. It was almost as if she had expected that one of the powerful spirits that figure so prominently in Eastern tales had spirited away the whole colony.

Coming nearer, they heard singing. "So far everything seems to be all right here," said Mrs. Gordon. "The brethren are now at morning prayers."

She had a key to a side gate, and went in that way so as not to disturb any one. Ingmar could scarcely walk; his knee had become quite stiff. Mrs. Gordon supported him with her arm, and helped him into the inner courtyard, where he sank down on a bench.

"You'd better go right in, Mrs. Gordon," he told her, "and find out if all's well with the colony."

"But first of all I must bandage your knee," she said. "There's plenty of time; you can hear they are still at morning prayers."

"Please listen to me, Mrs. Gordon," urged Ingmar. "You must go in at once, to see if anything has happened."

Ingmar sat watching her as she went up the steps and across the open hall to the meeting-room, and as she opened the door he heard someone inside speaking in a loud voice. The speaker, whoever he was, stopped abruptly, then the door closed, and all was quiet.

Ingmar had not been sitting there many moments, when the door of the meeting-room was thrown wide open and four men came out carrying a fifth between them. They went quietly down the steps and across the courtyard. As they were passing close by Ingmar, he bent forward to see whom they were carrying. It was Clifford! "Where are you taking him?" he asked.

"Down to the mortuary," replied the men, stopping; "he is dead."

Ingmar sprang up aghast. "How did he die?"

"No human hand has touched him," said Ljung Björn, who was one of the men.

"How did it happen?" Ingmar then asked.

"I'll tell you how it happened," said Ljung Björn. "After morning prayers this man Clifford rose up to speak. He said he had something to tell us, which he thought we would be pleased to hear. This was as far as he got, when the door opened and Mrs. Gordon came in. At sight of her he stopped short, and turned white as a sheet. At first he stood quite still, but as Mrs. Gordon walked toward him, he drew back a step or two, and put his arm up to his face. The whole proceeding looked so strange to us, that we all stood up at once. Then Clifford tried to pull himself together. He clenched his hands and breathed hard, like one fighting against a terrible fear, and went to meet Mrs. Gordon. 'How did you get here?' he said in a shaking voice. 'By the grace of God,' she replied, fixing him with a calm, grave

gaze. 'I know it,' he said, his eyes bulging with fear. 'I see who is behind you.' 'And I see who is behind you,' Mrs Gordon then said. 'It is Satan.' He again shrank back, holding his arm before his face, as if he could not bear her gaze. Mrs. Gordon advancing stretched forth her hand, but did not approach near enough to touch him. 'I see that Satan is behind you,' she repeated, and her voice sounded loud and awful. Then we all seemed to see Satan standing back of Clifford, and pointed at that which we thought we saw, shouting 'Satan, Satan.' Cowering, he made his way down to the door, and, as he was about to open it, we again cried 'Satan! Satan!' Then with an unearthly groan, he sank to the floor. We rushed forward to help him up, but the moment we touched him we knew he was dead."

"He was a traitor," Ingmar told them, "and deserved his fate."

"But what had he meant to do to us?" asked one of the men.

"That no one knows," said another. "Perhaps he wanted to wreck the colony."

"Yes—but how?"

"No one knows."

"And I suppose no one will ever know."

The colonists were much perturbed; none of them knew what Clifford had meant to do, or if the danger had been averted by his death. Hour after hour they spent in the meeting-room in prayer and the singing of hymns.

They seemed far removed from this world by the thought that God was with them.

Now and then in the course of the day crowds composed of the worst element to be found in Jerusalem gathered in the barren fields surrounding the colony, and stood watching the house. From this the brethren inferred that Clifford had planned to have this rabble storm the house and drive them from their home. But the crowds finally dispersed, and the day passed without further untoward occurrence.

In the evening when Mrs. Gordon came to see Ingmar Ingmarsson she found him sitting on his bed, his knee properly bandaged. She thanked him warmly for the great service he had rendered the colony and said among other things that if there was anything she could do for him in return, it would be a pleasure to her. "Won't you tell me what you have most at heart, that I may help you?"

Mrs. Gordon knew of course why Ingmar had come to Jerusalem and under ordinary circumstances she would not have thought of offering to aid him in a matter of that kind, but now she, as well as everyone else in the colony, was carried away by her feelings. There was nothing she wished for so much as to see Ingmar happy, after what he had done for her and her people.

Ingmar closed his eyes, and reflected a good while before venturing to speak. "You must promise not to take exception to what I'm about to ask of you," he said.

Mrs. Gordon promised to be indulgent.

"It looks as if the matter I came over for was likely to keep me here a long while," said Ingmar; "and time will hang heavily on my hands unless I have some work of the kind to which I am accustomed. If you want to do me a real service, Mrs. Gordon, I wish you would get Baram Pasha to let me take over his mill. You know that I have no scruples against earning money, as your people have, and besides it's the sort of work I like."

Mrs. Gordon looked at Ingmar wonderingly. His eyes were half closed, and his face quite impassive. She was surprised that he had not asked for something else, but at the same time she was glad he had not.

"I see no reason why I shouldn't arrange to do this for you," she said. "There would be nothing wrong in that, surely, and besides, it would afford us an opportunity to carry out the wishes of Baram Pasha."

"I thought you would help me," said Ingmar, thanking her, and they parted, much pleased with each other.

INGMAR'S FIGHT

INGMAR'S FIGHT

INGMAR had taken over Baram Pasha's mill and was himself the miller; first one and then another of the colonists came to help him with the work.

Now every miller knows that there is a good deal of magic about a mill, and the colonists soon found that they could not sit for a whole day listening to the hum of the mill-stones without becoming, as it were, bewitched. After a while it dawns upon those who listen that the mill stones hum: "We grind corn, we earn money, we do good; but what do you do? what do you do?"

And within him who hears this there springs up an irresistible desire to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. A veritable fever comes upon one who sits listening to the music of the mill. He will inevitably begin to wonder what he is fitted for, what he can do—whether there is any way in which he could be helpful to the community.

Those who had worked at the mill for a few days talked of nothing but the arable valleys of this land that were lying waste, of the many hillsides that ought to be planted with forest-trees, and the neglected vineyards that cried out for labourers.

When the millstones had been singing their song for some weeks there came a day when the Swedish peasants

rented a piece of land on the Plain of Sharon, and began to plow and sow. Shortly afterwards they rented a couple of large vineyards on the Mount of Olives. Later they set to work laying conduit-pipes in one of the valleys.

Once the Swedes had made a beginning the Americans and the Syrians followed suit. They began teaching in the schools; they procured a camera and went about the country taking photographs, which they sold to tourists, and they set up a little goldsmith's workshop in a corner of the colony.

Miss Young was now the principal of Aschmed Effendi's school, and young Swedish girls taught Mohammedan children sewing and knitting.

By autumn the whole colony was alive with the spirit of enterprise and activity; it had become a veritable anthill of industry.

And come to think of it, there had been no distress among the brethren the whole summer, not one of them had died since the day Ingmar took over the mill. Nor had anyone fretted himself insane over the evils of Jerusalem.

The brethren were now very happy and they loved their colony more than ever. They planned and carried out new undertakings, and all felt it was God's will that they should earn their bread by their own labour.

In the autumn Ingmar put Ljung Björn in charge of the mill while he himself remained at home in the colony. He and Gabriel and Bo were busy building

some kind of a shed in the field just outside. No one knew for what purpose the shed was to be used, nor was anyone allowed to see how they were fitting it up—that was a great secret.

When the shed was at length finished, Ingmar and Bo went down to Jaffa on a business errand. In a day or two they came back, each riding a fine chestnut horse. These horses were to be the colonists' very own. Had a sultan and a king knocked at the gate and declared they had come to join the colonists, they would not have received a more hearty welcome than was given to Ingmar and Björn as they rode in through the gate.

And the children, how they hung about those horses! and how proud the peasant who was to drive them before the plow! No two horses in all the East were so well cared for, and no night passed that some of the brethren did not go out to the barn to see that the mangers were well filled.

And the Swede, whoever it chanced to be, that in the morning harnessed the horses, could not help thinking to himself: "After all, this is a pretty good land to live in; I'm really beginning to feel contented here. What a pity Tims Halvor could not have lived to see all this! He would never have grieved himself to death if he'd had a pair of horses like these to drive."

Early one morning in September, while it was still dark, Ingmar and Bo left the colony to go to work in one of the vineyards on the Mount of Olives. They did not get on well with each other. There was no open quarrel

between them, but they were never of the same mind about anything. Suddenly they fell to disputing over which way they should go. Bo wanted to take the roundabout way, across the hills, saying it was easier walking there in the dark. Ingmar preferred the shorter but more difficult road, which went through the Valley of Jehoshaphat and then straight up the mountain.

When they had wasted some time discussing this, Ingmar proposed that they each go their own way, to see which could get there first. This was agreeable to Bo, so they finally set off.

As soon as they parted company Ingmar was seized with the old fears and longings that always came over him now when he happened to be by himself. Would our Lord never take pity on him, and let him go home? Would He never help him get Gertrude away from Jerusalem before she was quite out of her mind? "It seems strange that I should have made least headway in the matter for which I am here," he muttered as he walked along in the dark. "But in everything else I have succeeded far beyond my expectations. I hardly think the colonists would have gone in for productive work if I had not hit upon the happy thought of taking over the mill. It has been very gratifying to note the zest for work that has come to them lately. I have seen much that is good here, and learned many things; but just the same I can't help longing for home. This city fills me with dread and I shall never be able to breathe freely until I'm well out of it. Sometimes I have a feeling that

I shall die here; that I shall never go back, never again see Barbro or the old home."

He mused thus until he presently found himself at the bottom of the valley. High above him the battlements of the city walls were outlined against the dark sky, and on all sides he was shut in by great obstructing heights.

"This is a dismal place to be wandering through in the dark," thought he, suddenly remembering that he would have to pass both the Mohammedan and the Jewish cemeteries.

Then he called to mind something he had heard the previous day, but which at the time had not impressed him as being anything more than the usual tales one hears about the Holy City. Now, in the deep darkness, it struck him as a weird and horrible tale.

In the Jewish quarter there is a little hospital known throughout the city as a place where they never have any patients. Ingmar had passed it any number of times; he had looked in at the windows, and seen only unoccupied beds. The reason of this was obvious enough. The hospital had been founded by an English missionary society for the purpose of receiving Jewish patients, in order to convert them to Christianity; but the Jews, fearing that in a place of that sort they might have to eat *unclean* food, refused to be treated there.

But recently they had a patient at this hospital. It was a poor old Jewess, who had fallen in the street just outside the hospital, and broken her leg. She had been

carried in and treated there, but had died a few days afterwards.

Before the end came, she made the English nurses and the doctor solemnly promise to have her buried in the Jewish cemetery in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. She told them that, at her advanced age, she had journeyed to Jerusalem solely to be granted this boon, and if they could not promise her that, they might better have let her die in the street.

The English notified the head official of the Jewish community of her death, requesting him to send some of their people to take away the body and bury it.

To which the Jews replied, that the old woman having died in a Christian hospital could not be buried in the Jewish cemetery.

The missionaries did all in their power to persuade the Jews; they even appealed to the Chief Rabbi, but all in vain. Then there was nothing for them to do but to bury the body themselves. They were determined that the one wish of the poor old woman's life should be carried out. Paying no heed to the objections of the Jews, they had a grave dug in the cemetery in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and buried her there.

The Jews made no effort to stop them, but the following night they opened the grave and took out the coffin.

The English were bound to keep their word to the old woman. When they found that she had been thrown out of her grave, they put her back into it. The next night, however, she was dug up again.

Ingmar Ingmarsson suddenly stood still in the road, and listened. "Who knows?—perhaps those fiends have been at it to-night, too."

At first all seemed to be quiet, but presently he heard a sharp noise, such as is produced by the striking of an iron implement against stone. He hurriedly took a few steps in the direction whence the sound came, then stopped again to listen. Now he could distinctly hear that someone was plying a spade and heaving stones and gravel. He walked on a bit and heard more digging. "There are at least five or six men at work," he thought. "Good God! how can people treat the dead like that?"

As Ingmar listened a feeling of wrathful indignation kindled in him, which grew stronger every second. "This is no concern of yours," he said to calm himself. "You've got nothing whatever to do with it." But the blood leaped to his head, and his throat tightened so that he could scarcely draw his breath. "This is monstrous!" he cried. "Nothing could be worse." Standing stock-still, he raised his clenched fist and shook it threateningly. "You vile sneaks!" he hissed. "Just wait till I get at you!

"I've had enough of this and no one need expect me to pass quietly by and let you desecrate the dead."

So saying, he hastened toward the cemetery with quick, noiseless steps. He felt almost light-hearted. "I suppose this is sheer madness," he told himself; "but I wonder what my father would have done if something had tried to hold him back the day he rushed into the river to save the little children? I must do as father

once did, for a river of evil rages here, that carries away both the living and the dead. I can no longer stand quietly watching it from the shore, but must plunge in and buck against the stream."

Ingmar stood at the edge of a grave where some men were digging under the cover of darkness. He did not know how many there were, nor did he care; he rushed right in among them, snatching a spade from one and striking out with it to right and left. He had come so suddenly upon the men that he nearly frightened them out of their senses. They ran away without even trying to fight back, and Ingmar was soon standing there alone.

His first work was to fill in the grave; then he began to consider what was to be done next. It occurred to him that he had better remain on guard until daybreak. "If I leave now those wretches will surely come back," thought he.

He stood on the grave and waited, straining his ears at the least little sound. "I don't think they can have run very far just for one man." Presently he saw some dark figures stealthily creeping toward him. "Now they mean business," thought Ingmar, quickly raising his spade to ward off possible attack. All at once a hail of stones, large and small, broke over him. Immediately several men set upon him, and tried to knock him down.

A terrible struggle ensued. Ingmar had the strength of a giant, and threw down his assailants, one after the other, but they scrambled to their feet and went at him again. In the scuffle, one of the men fell just in front of

him as he was advancing, and Ingmar, stumbling over the man, fell heavily. Instantly he struck the ground he felt a sharp pain in one eye, which stunned him. He had a vague consciousness of the men throwing themselves upon him and binding him, but he was unable to make resistance; the pain in the eye was so acute that it rendered him powerless, and he thought for a moment that he was dying.

Bo had been thinking of Ingmar ever since the two had parted company. He had set off at a brisk gait in his eagerness to be the first at the mountain vineyard, but he had not walked many minutes before he slackened his pace. "I know that however much I may hurry, Ingmar will be sure to arrive ahead of me." he said, with a deprecating little laugh. "I've never seen anyone who has such luck in everything he puts his mind to, or one so well able to work his own will. I expect it will end in his taking Gertrude back to Dalecarlia. Haven't I seen how he has been running the colony for the past six months? Everything has gone just as he wished."

But when Bo arrived at the meeting-place on the Mount of Olives and did not find Ingmar there, he was well pleased. He straightway set to work and continued at it for some little time. "For once in his life he will find that his way was not the best one," thought Bo.

When it began to grow light and Ingmar had not yet put in an appearance, Bo became uneasy and wondered what could have happened him. He left off working and

went down the mountain side to look for him. "It's strange about Ingmar," thought Bo; "although I have reason enough not to like him, I should be very sorry if he came to any harm. He is a fine fellow, and has done great things for us all out here. If Gertrude had not come between us, I think we could be the best of friends."

When Bo came down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat he found Ingmar lying between two gravestones.

Ingmar hearing Bo's heavy footsteps raised his head a little. "Is that you, Bo?" he asked.

"Yes," said Bo; "but why are you lying here?" Just then he noticed Ingmar's face, and saw that both his eyes were closed and that one eye was badly swollen and bleeding. "Why, man! what have you done to yourself?"

"I've been fighting those grave-openers. I stumbled over one fellow who had a knife in his hand that must have caught me right in the eye."

Bo was on his knees in an instant, untying Ingmar's hands. "How did you come to fight with them?"

"I heard them digging as I was walking along the road."

"And you wouldn't allow them to turn the old woman out of her grave again?"

"No," said Ingmar, "I couldn't let that happen."

"It was mighty courageous of you," said Bo.

"Oh, no," Ingmar returned, "it was only stupid of me; but I couldn't help myself."

"Stupid or not," said Bo, "I want you to know that because you've done this thing I'm your friend from this time forth."

ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

INGMAR was attended by a physician from the English Ophthalmic Hospital who came out to the colony every day to dress the injured eye. The wound healed quickly and Ingmar was soon able to leave his bed.

On one of his visits the doctor noticed that the sound eye was much inflamed. He looked concerned, and after giving orders as to how it should be treated, he advised Ingmar to leave Palestine as soon as possible. "I am afraid that you have a touch of the dangerous Oriental eye disease. I will do what I can for you, but your sound eye in its present condition is very susceptible to the infection, which is in the very air out here. If you remain you are likely to become blind within a few weeks."

This was sorrowful news to the colonists, not only to Ingmar's relatives, but to all. Everyone felt that Ingmar had rendered them incalculable service in persuading them to earn their bread by their labour, like other people, and that the colony could ill afford to lose so valuable a friend. Nevertheless they thought it best for Ingmar to go back. Mrs. Gordon said that she would have one of the brethren accompany him, as he was not able now to travel alone.

Ingmar listened for a while in silence to all this talk about sending him home. At length he said: "I'm not so sure that I shall go blind if I stay."

Mrs. Gordon then asked him what he proposed to do.

"I've not finished with that for which I came out here," he said.

"Do you mean to say that you intend to remain?"

"Yes," replied Ingmar. "I should be sorry to have to go back with my errand unaccomplished."

Mrs. Gordon now gave evidence of her high esteem for Ingmar. She went straight to Gertrude and told her that he was determined to stay even at the risk of losing his eyesight. "I suppose you know on whose account he insists upon remaining?"

"Yes," said Gertrude, looking wide-eyed at Mrs. Gordon, who said nothing further. She could not in so many words importune the girl to break an established rule of the colony, but Gertrude understood at once that anything she might do for Ingmar's sake would be approved. "If it were anybody else, Mrs. Gordon would not be so ready to oblige," she thought, feeling a little hurt. "But as they all seem to think that I'm not quite right, I suppose they'd like to be rid of me."

All day long, one after another the brethren kept coming to Gertrude and talking of Ingmar, but no one had the temerity to tell her plainly that she ought to go home with him. The Swedish peasants, in turn, sat down beside her and spoke of the hero who had fought for the dead in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, reminding her that

Ingmar had now shown that he was a true son of his father. "It would be a great pity," they said, "if such a man were to go blind."

Gabriel said to her: "I saw him the day of the auction at Ingmar Farm, and let me tell you that had you seen him then, you would have forgiven him anything."

Gertrude felt as if she were having one of those dreams wherein one seems to be striving to hurry and yet cannot move a step. She wanted to help Ingmar, but seemed powerless to do so. "How can I," she asked herself, "when I no longer love him? Yet how can I help it when I know he'll go blind if I don't?"

That evening as she stood under the great sycamore tree thinking that she really ought to go back with Ingmar, though unable to make up her mind, Bo came up.

"It is sometimes the case," he said, "that one can be glad for one's misfortune, and grieve over one's good fortune."

Gertrude looked at Bo with frightened eyes. She did not speak, but he knew she was thinking, "Are you also going to harass and torment me?"

Bo winced a little, but in a moment he said what he had come to say: "When you have loved some girl all your life, you are naturally afraid of losing her. But to find her so hard that she will neither forgive nor forget is the worst that could happen."

Bo said this so tenderly that Gertrude, instead of resenting it, began to cry. Then flashed the memory of a dream she once had, in which she had put out Ingmar's

eyes. "That dream seems to be coming true," she thought, "and I am really as wicked and cruel as I was in the dream. Ingmar will surely become blind, and all because of me." She was heartsick at the thought of her utter helplessness. Night came and found her still undecided.

At dawn she arose and went as usual to the Mount of Olives. The whole way she struggled to break the spell that bound her, but her will was as if paralyzed. She had once seen a fallen house-swallow beating its wings against the earth, unable to get enough wind under them to rise and fly away. So she, too, seemed to be fluttering helplessly.

When she was at last on the Mount of Olives, standing in the place where it was her habit to watch the sun rise, she saw the dervish whom she had thought was the Christ sitting on the ground with his legs crossed under him, his face turned toward Jerusalem.

Gertrude did not for a moment forget that the man was but a poor dervish, whose sole claim to greatness lay in his power to make his followers dance harder than those of other dervishes. A tremor of pity passed through her as she noted the dark shadows under his eyes and the lines of anguish about his mouth. She stood with folded hands looking at him. She was not dreaming now, nor was she in a trance. It was simply this: The man's marvellous likeness to the pictured Christ made her feel as though she were in the presence of one endowed with the attributes of Divinity.

Again it seemed to her that he had but to reveal himself to mankind, and it would be made manifest that he had fathomed the depths of all wisdom. She believed that the winds and waves were subject to his bidding; that he talked face to face with God; that his thoughts were of unseen things, of which none other knew. Had she been ill, she thought, she would have been healed merely by looking upon him.

"He cannot be an ordinary mortal, for, beholding him, I feel the bliss of Heaven descend upon me."

For some moments the dervish seemed oblivious to her nearness. Suddenly he turned and looked straight at her, regarding her long and intently, then he put forth his hand for her to kiss. With deep humility, she knelt and pressed her lips against his hand. Whereupon the dervish, with benign dignity, signed to her to leave him to his meditations. Gertrude obediently rose and walked away.

She felt that there was a deep significance in his manner of dismissing her. It was as though he had said: "Thou hast been mine for a space and served me, but now thou art free. Go live for thy fellowmen."

As she neared the colony her blissful illusion faded. She knew of course that he was not the Christ, but seeing him again had wrought a great change in her. Because he had appeared to her eyes as the Divine Embodiment, the very stones along the way seemed to echo the precepts the Redeemer Himself once taught in this place.

Immediately upon her return she went to see Ingmar. "I will go back with you, Ingmar," she said.

Ingmar drew a deep breath, as if a great weight had been lifted from his heart. He took her hands in his, and pressed them gently. "God has been good to me," he said.

"WE SHALL MEET BY-AND-BY"

"WE SHALL MEET BY-AND-BY"

THERE was a hustle and bustle in the colony. The Dalecarlians were so busy, each on his own account, that they had no time for their regular work in field and vineyard. The Swedish children had been excused from school that they might stay at home and help their elders.

Ingmar and Gertrude were to leave for Sweden within two days, which meant hurriedly getting ready the things one wanted to send by them to friends at home.

Here at last was an opportunity to send some little remembrance to former school-fellows and old friends of a lifetime. They could now show that they still had a kindly thought for one or other from whom they had been estranged during the trying period, before they were called to the Holy Land, and for certain wise elderly people whose friendly warnings they had resented at the time of their departure. This was their chance to give a little happiness to the old folks at home, to the sweetheart they had left behind them, to the pastor and the schoolmaster who had taught them, one and all.

Ljung Björn and Bullat Gunner sat the whole day with pens in their toil-stiffened hands, writing letters to relatives and friends, while Gabriel stood turning out cups of olive-wood and Karin Ingmarsson did up any number of large photographs of Gethsemane, of the Church of the

Holy Sepulchre, of the beautiful mansion in which the colonists live, and its large meeting-room, arranging them in different parcels.

The children were busy drawing pictures in Indian ink on thin pieces of olive wood, as they had been taught at the American school, and making photograph-frames, on which they gummed specimens of every variety of seed, kernel and corn to be found in the East.

Martha Ingmarsson took a large piece of linen fabric off her loom and cut it up into towels and serviettes on which she embroidered initials. These were to go to a sister-in-law and a brother-in-law. Smiling, she thought to herself: "The folks at home will see that I have not forgotten how to weave since coming to Jerusalem."

The two Ingmarsson girls who had been to America were wrapping up jars of peach and apricot preserves. Each jar bore the name of a dear friend, the thought of whom brought tears to their eyes.

Israel Tomasson's wife stood rolling out gingerbread dough, and had besides a cake in the oven to watch. The cake was for Gertrude and Ingmar to eat on their journey, but the ginger cookies, which would keep any length of time, they were not to touch. These were to be divided between the old beggar woman at Muckelmire, who had stood at the roadside so clean and tidy the day they set out for Jerusalem, and old Eva Gunnarsdotter, who had been one of them in days gone by.

As the various parcels were made up they were brought to Gertrude, who packed them in a large trunk. Had

Gertrude not been born and bred in the parish she would never have dared undertake the difficult commission of delivering these many things to the right parties, for some of the parcels bore singular addresses. She would have had to think twice to know where to look for "Franz who lives at the crossways," or "Lisa, sister of Pehr Larsson," or "Eric, who two years ago was in service at the home of the County Judge."

Ljung Björn's son Gunnar came with the largest parcel; it was addressed to "Karin who sat next to me in school, and who lived somewhere in the big forest." Her last name he had forgotten. But he had made for Karin a pair of patent leather shoes, with French heels, and prided himself upon their being the neatest thing in the shoemaking line ever turned out in the colony. "Greet her from me and tell her that she must come out here as she promised when I left home," he said as he entrusted the precious bundle to Gertrude.

The Dalecarlian yeomen entrusted to Ingmar their letters and special messages for their friends in the homeland. "Don't fail to go to the pastor, the Chairman of the Parish Council, and the schoolmaster," they wound up with, "and tell them that you have seen with your own eyes that we fare well here and are happy, that we live in a house, and not in caves, and that we work for our bread and lead honest lives."

From the day Bo had found Ingmar lying wounded in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the two had been on most

friendly terms. Bo had spent all his spare moments with Ingmar, who during his illness had occupied one of the guest chambers. But on the day Gertrude decided to go home with Ingmar he did not visit the sick-room. Ingmar asked for him several times, but none knew where he was.

As the day wore on Ingmar grew restless. For the first few moments after Gertrude had said she would return with him, he had felt relieved and happy to think that he could take her away from this dreadful land, to which she had been driven by his treatment. To be sure he was still glad that she was going, though every hour his longing for his wife grew stronger. He realized now that it was utterly impossible for him to carry out this thing that he had taken upon himself. There were moments when he felt that he must tell Gertrude his whole story, but on reflection, it seemed better not to. He feared that should Gertrude learn that he had ceased to love her, she might refuse to go home with him. Nor did he know whether she still cared for him, or now loved someone else. At one time he had thought that she must love Bo, but of late he had reached the conclusion that she loved no one save Him whose coming she had awaited every morning on the Mount of Olives. "Once she is home again," he thought, "her old love for me may reawaken. In that case it would be better perhaps to marry her and try to make her happy, than to go about all the while longing for one who can never again be mine."

Although he struggled to persuade himself of this, his

heart rebelled. Sitting there with eyes bandaged, he seemed to see his wife constantly before him. "I am hers," he mused. "No one else can be anything to me. I know why I set out upon this fool's errand; I wanted to be as big a man as my father. I had hoped to bring Gertrude back from Jerusalem just as my father brought my mother home from the prison. It is clear now that my case is different. I shall fail because I love another."

Toward evening Bo came. He stopped just inside the door, as if intending to be off in a moment. "I hear that you've been asking for me," he said.

"Yes; I'm going home," Ingmar told him.

"I know," Bo answered curtly.

Ingmar turned his head toward Bo, as if wanting to see his face. "You sound as though you were in a hurry," he said.

"I've a good deal to do," Bo returned.

"There was something I wanted to ask you," said Ingmar.

Bo came a step nearer.

"How would you like to go home to Sweden for a month or two?" Ingmar began. "I know that your mother would be very glad to see you."

"I don't see why you should ask me such a thing."

"If you want to come along with us I'll pay your passage."

"Indeed!" said Bo.

"Your mother is my father's only sister, you know,"

said Ingmar eagerly, "and I'd like to afford her the pleasure of seeing you once again in this life."

"You must want to take the whole colony back with you," Bo retorted, a bit nettled.

Ingmar was nonplussed. He had so hoped that he might be able to persuade Bo to go home with him, and felt that if he would only come along Gertrude would surely grow to like him better than she liked himself. He knew that Bo had always been devoted to Gertrude, which ought to count for something with her.

In a moment Ingmar took heart again. "It was just my stupidity," he thought; "I didn't approach him in the right way." Then he said: "I must confess that it is mostly on my own account I'm asking you to do this."

He waited for a response; when none seemed forthcoming, he continued: "I don't know how Gertrude and I will be able to get along by ourselves on this troublesome journey. If I must travel with my eyes bandaged, how shall I ever manage to get in and out of the little ferries that take you to the steamers, and climb accommodation ladders, and what not? I'd be sure to miss my footing and fall into the sea. I think we really should have a man along."

"You're right about that," Bo agreed.

"And then, Gertrude wouldn't understand about buying tickets and looking after luggage."

"Of course she wouldn't," said Bo. "You must have some man with you."

"I was sure you would see how necessary it was for us to have a companion," cried Ingmar, elated.

"Why not ask Gabriel? His father would no doubt be glad to see him."

For a moment Ingmar was so taken aback that he could not speak, and when at last he did, he seemed quite downcast. "I had counted on having you," he said.

"Oh, don't count on me," Bo answered. "I'm very happy here. Almost any of the others would be glad to accompany you, I'm sure."

"But it makes a great difference to me who goes. You have toured about so much more than any of the others."

"Anyway I can't go, I tell you," Bo declared.

Ingmar was growing more and more uneasy. "This is a great disappointment to me," he sighed. "I thought you really meant it when you said you'd be my friend."

"I thank you for the offer," Bo quickly cut in, "but there's nothing that you could say that would make me change my mind. Now I must be about my business." He turned and left the room before Ingmar could say another word.

Once outside the door, Bo did not appear to be in any great hurry. He walked slowly down the steps and on through the gateway, and then seated himself under the old sycamore tree. It was now evening and quite dark, though the stars were out and a crescent moon hung in the sky.

Bo had been sitting there but a few moments, when

the gate opened and Gertrude came out. She stood for a while looking about her before she descried him.

"Is it you, Bo?" she asked, coming toward him. "I thought I should find you here," she said, sitting down beside him.

"We two have sat here many an evening," said Bo.

"So we have, Bo; but I suppose this is to be the last."

"I suppose it is." Bo sat rigidly erect and his voice sounded cold and hollow. One would have thought that this was a matter of no moment to him.

"Ingmar tells me he is going to ask you to go back with us," said Gertrude.

"He has already asked me and I have said no."

"I might have known you wouldn't care to come!"

They sat for some time in silence, as though they had nothing more to say to each other. Gertrude now and then stole a glance at Bo, who sat gazing at the sky.

When the silence became oppressive, Bo, still looking into the sky, said: "Isn't it too cold for you to be sitting out here?"

"Do you want me to go?" asked Gertrude.

Bo bowed his head a little, as if nodding assent, thinking she could not see it in the dark. Then he said: "Oh, I like your being here."

"I came out to-night because I thought we might not have another opportunity to be together before I leave, and I wanted to thank you for the many times that you have guarded me in my walks to the Mount of Olives."

"I only did that to please myself," Bo replied.

"And I must also thank you for fetching water for me that time from the Well of Paradise," Gertrude added with a wistful smile.

Bo tried to speak, but no words came—only a sound like a sob.

To Gertrude there was something strangely appealing about Bo that evening, and she felt the deepest sympathy for him. "This parting is going to be terribly hard for poor Bo," she thought. "He's a stout-hearted fellow not to complain, for I know that he has always loved me. I wish I knew what to say to comfort him. If I could only say something that he would like to recall when sitting alone evenings under this tree!"

While Gertrude was thus musing, her own heart seemed to contract with grief and a strange numbness crept over her. "Indeed, I'm going to miss Bo," she thought, "we have had so much to talk over of late, and I've grown so accustomed to seeing his face light up with happiness whenever we chanced to meet, and besides, it has been nice to have someone near who was always pleased no matter what I did."

The feeling that she would miss him grew and increased like a sudden attack of illness. "What has come over me?" she wondered. "Surely this having to part from Bo can't be such a grievous thing?"

Bo suddenly broke the silence. "I've been thinking of something the whole evening," he said.

"Tell me about it!" cried Gertrude eagerly. Her heart felt lighter now that he had spoken.

"Ingmar once told me about a sawmill he has close by his farm. I think he wanted me to go back with him so that he could rent it to me."

"That shows how much Ingmar thinks of you, Bo, for that sawmill is his pet hobby."

"I've heard the buzzing of that mill in my ears the whole evening," said Bo, "the whirr of the saws and the boom of the logs clashing against each other in the river. You can't imagine how delightful it all is to me! And I've also been wondering how it would seem to be working on my own account, instead of being buried like this in a colony."

"So that is what you have been thinking about while sitting here so quiet," said Gertrude coldly, for somehow she felt disappointed at Bo's utterances. "You don't have to sigh long for that; you've only to go back with Ingmar."

"But there's something else too," said Bo. "Ingmar also told me he had timber lying ready to build a cottage close to the sawmill. He has staked out a piece of land on a hill, overlooking the rapid, on which a couple of fine birch trees are growing. It's that cottage I've seen, inside and out, all the evening. I can see the carpet of fir-twigs before the door and I can see the fire blazing on the hearth; and, coming home from the sawmill, I can see someone standing in the doorway waiting for me."

"It's growing cold, Bo," Gertrude interrupted. "Don't you think we had better go inside now?"

"So you don't care to stay out here any longer?" said Bo.

However, they neither of them stirred. After a long silence, Gertrude said: "I thought, Bo, that you loved the colony above everything in this world, and that nothing could induce you to leave it."

"There's just one thing for which I would leave it."

"Won't you tell me what it is?"

After some deliberation, Bo answered in a broken voice: "I may as well tell you. It is this—if the woman I love were to tell me that she loves me."

Gertrude was so still it seemed as if she hardly dare breathe.

Although she said not a word, it was as though Bo had heard her say she loved him, for he began to speak with ease and glibness. "You'll see, Gertrude, that your old love for Ingmar will soon reawaken," he said. "You have been angry with him for giving you up, but now that you have forgiven him you will grow as fond of him as you were in the old days. Think of all he has done to win you back! Why, he'd rather become blind than go home without you."

"Yes, it would be dreadful of me not to like him," she said in a faint voice. Until that evening she had felt in her heart of hearts that she could never love anyone but Ingmar.

"I can't think clearly to-night, Bo. I don't know what has come over me, but you mustn't speak to me of Ingmar."

Now first the one and then the other said something about going in; but neither moved until Karin called to

them: "Ingmar would like to see both of you in his room."

While Gertrude had talked with Bo, Karin had been in to see Ingmar and had given him certain messages for friends at home. She had dragged out her talk to such length it was quite plain that she had something to tell Ingmar which she hesitated to say. At last she said in such an offhand manner, that anyone knowing her peculiarities would have guessed at once that this was the real object of her visit: "Ljung Björn has had a letter from his brother Pehr."

"Has he?" said Ingmar.

"I must confess I was unjust to you the day of our talk in my room, soon after your arrival."

"You only said what you thought to be right."

"I know now that you had good cause for leaving Barbro. Pehr writes that she is not a good woman."

"But I never said anything to you against Barbro!"

"They say there's a baby at Ingmar Farm."

"When did the baby come?"

"They say sometime in August."

"It's a lie!" Ingmar shouted, bringing his clenched fist down heavily on the table, barely missing Karin's hand, which rested there.

"You came near striking my hand."

"I didn't know your hand was there."

Karin went on talking about this for some time, and Ingmar soon grew calmer. "You must understand that it is not very pleasant for me to hear such things," he

told her; "so tell Ljung Björn from me not to let this go any further until we know the truth about it."

"Never you fear, I'll see that he holds his tongue."

"And will you please ask Gertrude and Bo to come to me?" Ingmar added.

When they came into the sick-room they found Ingmar sitting over in a dark corner. At first they could hardly see him. "You sent for us," said Bo. "What is the matter, Ingmar?"

"This—that I have taken upon myself more than I can carry out."

"Ingmar, tell me frankly what it is that troubles you?" said Gertrude, going up to him; "we have never had any secrets from each other since we were children."

Ingmar groaned.

Gertrude went quite close to him and laid her hand on his head. "I think I can guess what it is," said she.

Ingmar suddenly drew himself up. "No, Gertrude, you won't have to do any guessing," he replied, taking from his breast-pocket a banknote case, which he gave to her. "You will find in there a bulky letter addressed to the pastor."

"Yes, here it is," said Gertrude.

"I want you and Bo to read that letter. I wrote it soon after my arrival, when I still had the courage not to send it."

Gertrude and Bo sat down at the table, and began the reading. Ingmar from his corner could hear them turning the pages. "Now they are reading about this," he

thought, "now about that. And now they have come to the place where Barbro tells me how Berger Sven Persson tricked us into marrying. Now they are reading of how she bought back the old silver beakers; and now they've come to that tale Stig Börjesson told me. Gertrude now knows that I no longer care for her, and sees what a poor wretch I am."

There was breathless silence in the room. Gertrude and Bo did not move, save when they turned a page. "How will Gertrude be able to understand that it was borne in upon me to-day, the very day she decided to go back with me, that I must let her know it is not herself but Barbro that I love? And why is it that it was only on hearing Barbro slandered that I knew I could never marry any other? I don't know what has come over me, but I feel that I'm not myself any more."

He waited anxiously for the others to speak, but all he heard was the rustling of the pages. Unable to bear the suspense any longer, he carefully drew the bandage up from the eye he could see with, and looked at Gertrude and Bo. The two were still reading, their heads so close together that they sat almost cheek to cheek, and Bo's arm was around Gertrude's waist. As they read on they drew nearer to each other, and now and then they glanced up from the paper and looked deep into each other's eyes. And their eyes were very bright.

When they had finished the last page, Gertrude nestled close to Bo, and thus they sat clasped in each other's arms. They had perhaps grasped nothing more of what

they had read than the fact that there was no longer any obstacle in the way of their love.

Ingmar folded his big hands, and thanked God. It was a long while before any of the three moved.

The colonists had gathered in the meeting-room for morning prayers. It was the last service in the colony at which Ingmar would be present. He and Gertrude and Bo were leaving by train for Jaffa in a few hours. Bo, the previous day, had told Mrs. Gordon and one or two of the leading men of the colony that it was his intention to go back with Ingmar to Sweden, to remain there. In giving his reasons he had been obliged, of course, to tell the whole of Ingmar's story, and Mrs. Gordon after pondering what she had heard, said: "Certainly no one would want to make Ingmar more unhappy than he is already, therefore I'm quite willing that you should go with him. Somehow I feel that you and Gertrude will one day return to us. I'm sure you can never be as content elsewhere."

That the three might take their departure quietly it was decided that the colonists should only be told that Bo was going with Ingmar and Gertrude to help them on the journey.

Just as the service was about to begin Ingmar was led into the room. Mrs. Gordon immediately rose and went to meet him. Taking him by the hand, she conducted him to the chair beside her own and carefully helped him to be seated. Then Miss Young, who was at

the organ, began a hymn, after which the usual service was held.

When Mrs. Gordon had finished her short explanatory Bible-reading, old Miss Hoggs stood up and prayed that God would grant Ingmar a safe journey and a happy home-coming. Then one after another the Americans and the Syrians arose and prayed that God would bring Ingmar into the light of truth. Some spoke very beautifully, and promised to pray every day for Ingmar, who was their dear brother, and hoped he might soon be restored to health. And they all expressed a wish that he would come back to Jerusalem.

While the foreigners were speaking, the Swedes, who were up in front, sat silently regarding Ingmar. As they did so, they thought of the justice and order and safety that prevailed in their homeland, and felt that while he had been among them some measure of this had come to them. But now that he was leaving, they felt as if lost in a lawless land, among all these people who blindly and mercilessly fight for the souls of men.

And again with tender sadness their thoughts turned to their homeland. They seemed to see the old parish with its fields and woodlands, and the people going about in peace and quietude. It was all so secure. Day after day passed in the same even way, and the one year was so much like the other that one could hardly tell which was which.

As they sat musing on the peaceful life at home, they suddenly realized what a big and wonderful thing it was

to be out in the world, to have a goal before you, and to be away from the dull monotony of the old days. One of them now lifted up his voice and prayed in Swedish, saying: "O Lord, I thank Thee for letting me come to Jerusalem." Then one after another the Swedes rose and gave thanks to God for calling them to His Holy City.

They thanked Him for the dear colony, which had meant so much to them; they thanked Him that their children could learn in their tender years to live in peace and concord with all mankind; they hoped that the younger generation might attain a larger growth in grace than they themselves had attained. They gave thanks to God for persecution, for suffering, and for the beautiful teachings they had been called to spread. None sat down until they had testified to the great inner joy that had come to them. And Ingmar knew that all this was said for his benefit; that this was what they wished him to tell the people at home.

As Ingmar listened to these testimonies he straightened himself a little, he held his head high and the tense expression of his mouth was now more marked than ever.

When they had all spoken, Miss Young played the closing hymn, after which every one got up to leave, thinking the meeting was over. Then Mrs. Gordon said: "To-day we must also have a Swedish hymn."

Whereupon the Swedes sang the hymn they had sung when leaving their fatherland. "We shall meet by-and-by; we shall meet in that Eden above."

As they sang, a wave of emotion swept over them and tears came into many eyes. For now they thought of all those from whom they were separated, and should never again meet this side of heaven.

At the close of the hymn Ingmar stood up. He wanted to say a few words to his compatriots, as if spoken from the country to which he was returning.

"You people are a great honour to us at home," he said, "and we will indeed be glad to meet you again, wherever that meeting may be—whether on earth or in heaven. There is nothing more beautiful than to see people making sacrifices for righteousness' sake."

THE CHILD

THE CHILD

ABOUT a month after Ingmar had left for Jerusalem old Lisa of Ingmar Farm noticed that Barbro had become strangely restless and uneasy. "How queer and wild her eyes look!" she thought. "I wonder if she can be losing her mind?"

So the old woman determined to find out what was troubling Barbro. "I can't understand what has come over you lately," she said. "When I was young I saw one winter the mistress at Ingmar Farm going about with just such a look in her eyes as you've got."

"Was it the one who killed her child?" asked Barbro quickly.

"Yes," the old woman replied, "and I'm beginning to think that you mean to do the same thing."

To which Barbro made no direct reply. "Every time I hear that story," she said, "there's just one thing about it I can't understand."

"And what might that be?"

"Why she didn't do away with herself too."

The old woman, who sat spinning, stopped her wheel and looked straight at Barbro. "I don't wonder you feel bad when there's a little one on the way, and your husband gone to a foreign land. He couldn't have known about this when he left you."

"Neither of us knew," said Barbro in a faint voice, as if weighed down by a sorrow too heavy for words.

"But now, of course, you'll write him to come home."

"No," said Barbro. "My only comfort is the thought of his being away."

The old woman was horrified. "Do you call that a comfort!" she gasped.

Barbro stood at the window, staring straight before her. "Don't you know that a curse rests upon me?" she asked, trying to speak in a steady voice.

"Oh, one can't go in and out without hearing this or that," returned the old woman. "To be sure I have heard that you come of the Sorrow Hill people."

Then for a while no more was said. Old Lisa had resumed her spinning. She now and then stole a glance at Barbro, who was still at the window and who stood shaking as if from fright.

Presently old Lisa got up from her work and walked toward the door.

"Where are you going?" asked Barbro.

"Well, if you want to know, I'm going to try to find someone who will write to Ingmar."

Barbro quickly placed herself in Lisa's way. "You'd better not try," she said. "Before you could have the letter written I'd be lying at the bottom of the river."

They stood eyeing each other. Barbro was big and strong. Old Lisa thought she would use force if need be to keep her there, when Barbro suddenly burst into a laugh, and stepped aside. "Oh, write if you must!" she

said, "I don't care. It will simply mean that I shall have to end it all sooner than I had intended."

The old woman seeing that she must proceed cautiously with Barbro while the latter was in this desperate frame of mind, said: "Indeed I'll not write."

"By all means do!" cried Barbro. "It won't affect me one way or the other. Can't you comprehend that I shall have to do away with myself in any case? It would be wicked to allow this curse to go on forever."

Old Lisa went back to her spinning-wheel.

"Aren't you going to see about that letter?" asked Barbro, following her up.

"Will you let me have a sensible talk with you?" said old Lisa.

"Why, of course."

"I will promise you not to say anything about all this, if you will promise not to harm yourself and the child you are carrying before we are quite sure about its being the sort that you expect."

On thinking it over, Barbro said: "Have I your word, then, that afterwards I may do as I like?"

"Yes," replied the old woman, "afterwards you can do as you like, that I promise you."

"I might as well do it at once," said Barbro wearily.

"I thought you wanted above everything to give Ingmar a chance to right the wrong he has done another," said the old woman, "but how could he if he were to hear such news of you?"

Barbro started and pressed her hand to her heart.

"Let it be as you wish," she said. "This is a hard thing you are asking of me, but mind you keep your promise."

Old Lisa betrayed nothing and Barbro was so careful to guard her secret that no one even suspected what was going to happen. Luckily for her, the spring came very early that year. By the middle of March the snows in the forest had melted, and as soon as there was a blade of grass to feed upon Barbro had the cows driven up to the *säter*, which was on a lonely mountain-side far from any habitation. She and the old servant went along to tend the cows.

Near the end of May the child was born. It was a boy, a puny and weak little thing that cried all the time. When old Lisa showed him to Barbro, she laughed bitterly. "It was needless your making me live for the sake of this child."

"You can't tell when they're as little as that what they'll grow up to be," replied the old woman comfortingly.

"Now mind you keep your promise to let me do as I see fit," said Barbro sternly.

"Yes; but I must first be quite sure that he is blind."

Barbro was more ill this time than last. The first week she felt too weak to leave her bed. The child was not with the mother. Lisa kept it in one of the small hay-sheds at the *säter* and took care of it night and day. She fed it on goat's milk, and only with the greatest difficulty managed to keep it alive. Once or twice a day

she brought the child into the cabin, but Barbro always turned away so as not to see it.

One day old Lisa stood at the low window in the cabin holding the child in her arms; it was crying as usual, and the old woman could not help remarking to herself what a pitiful little morsel it was. "My goodness!" she cried out, suddenly bending forward, "if there isn't company coming!"

In a twinkling she was over by the bed.

"You'll have to take the child, Barbro, while I run out and tell them they can't come inside, as you are sick."

Then she laid the infant on the bed and went out.

Barbro let it lie there crying, without touching it. Old Lisa was back in a moment.

"That child's cries can be heard over the whole forest," she said. "If you can't hush it, how are we going to prevent people finding out about it?"

Directly this was said out she went again, and Barbro not knowing what else she could do, put the child to the breast.

The old woman was gone a good while. When she returned the child was asleep and Barbro lay looking at it.

"You needn't be afraid," said old Lisa, "they couldn't have heard anything, for they went off in another direction."

Barbro gave her a knowing look. "No doubt you think you've done something very clever," she said. "Don't you suppose I know there was no one there? That was merely an excuse to make me take the boy."

"I'll take him away again, if you say so."

"He can just as well lie here until he awakes."

Toward evening old Lisa again offered to relieve the mother of the infant. The little one now lay quiet and good, opening and closing its tiny hands.

"Where do you keep him at night?" asked Barbro.

"He lies in the hay-shed."

"Do you mean to say that you let him lie out there, as if he were only a kitten?"

"I didn't think it mattered much how this young one fared; but if you'd rather keep it here, all right."

One morning, when the boy was about a week old, Barbro sat up in bed and watched the old woman swaddle him. "How awkwardly you take hold of him!" said Barbro. "No wonder he cries so much."

"I've tended babies before," the old woman retorted, "and I think I know as much about them as you do."

Barbro thought to herself that never had she seen anyone handle a child so roughly. "You are holding him in such a way that he's getting blue in the face," she said impatiently.

"I didn't know I was expected to fuss over this poor little changeling as if he were a prince," snapped the old woman. "But if my way doesn't suit you, do it yourself." With that, she plumped the child down on the bed, and went off in a huff.

Barbro rearranged the child's bands and things, and it was soon quiet and comfortable. "Don't you see how good he is?" she said when Lisa came back.

"I have always been told I was a good hand with children," muttered the old woman, who was still in a bad humour.

After that Barbro herself looked after the child. One day while still confined to her bed, she asked Lisa to give her some clean things for the boy. The old woman replied that she had just put to soak what few little baby rags there were. Barbro flushed and tears of chagrin filled her eyes. "This child is no better off than a beggar's baby," she said.

"You should have thought of all that before," the old woman returned. "I wonder what you would have done if I hadn't gathered together all the baby-clothes I could lay my hands on, and brought them with me."

The deep despondency from which Barbro had suffered during the winter months overwhelmed her again, and made her hard. "It would have been better if this child had never been swaddled," she said.

The next day Barbro was up for the first time She brought out her shears, a needle and some thread, and proceeded to cut up a sheet to make clothes for the child. When she had been sewing for some little time, her morbid thoughts returned. "What is the use of my making these things for the boy! It would be better for both of us if I went down into the bog with him, for it's there we must end sooner or later."

She went out to speak to old Lisa, who was milking the cows before driving them to pasture. "Lisa, do you

know how long it will be before we can be certain that the child sees?" she asked.

"In a week, I should think, or perhaps a fortnight."

Barbro hurried back to the house and took up her work again. Her hand shook so that she could hardly guide the shears, and she was cutting her cloth very unevenly. Soon she trembled all over, and was obliged to leave off working for a while. "What ever is the matter with me?" she wondered. "Can it be that I'm trembling from joy because I may have the child a little longer?"

Old Lisa had a hard time of it at the *säter*. She had both to drive the cows to grass and do the milking. Barbro had no thought for anything but her child, and the old servant got no help at all from her. "I think, Barbro, that you might do a little work, and not spend all your time gazing at that young one!" old Lisa grumbled when she came in one day all tired out.

"You'll have help enough later on," Barbro assured her; "but during the few precious days still left to us I don't intend to leave him for a moment."

The fonder Barbro grew of the child the stronger became her conviction that the greatest mercy that she could show it would be to carry out her first intention. The child continued weak and fretful. It seemed hardly to have gained an ounce in weight and looked as tiny now as when it was born, but what troubled her most was that the child's eyelids were always red and swollen, and it made no effort to raise them.

One day old Lisa happened to mention the child's age. "He is now three weeks old, Barbro," she said.

"No, he won't be that till to-morrow," Barbro quickly corrected her.

"Oh indeed," said the old woman. "Then I must have made some mistake in the count, for I certainly remember that he was born on a Wednesday."

"I think you might let me have him just one more day," Barbro pleaded.

When old Lisa was dressing the next morning she said: "The grass round here is very poor, so I shall have to drive the cows further into the forest; I don't expect to come back with them before night." Barbro quickly turned to her as if wanting to say something, then pressed her lips tight together. "Do you wish anything?" queried the old woman, feeling that Barbro wanted her to stay at home. But receiving no response, she went about her business.

The old woman was long coming home that night. The cows strayed and she kept calling to them all the while, for they stopped whenever they came upon a tuft of green. Walking along she muttered to herself and scolded the stubborn animals. "Oh dear!" she sighed at last, "you needn't be in such a hurry to get back, old Lisa. You'll be home quite soon enough for what awaits you there."

When she opened the door to the cabin she saw Barbro sitting with the boy in her lap, crooning to him. "Oh,

Lisa, I thought you'd never come home!" Barbro exclaimed. "I don't know what I'm to do, the boy is all broken out." She rushed up to the old woman with the child and showed her a couple of red spots on its neck.

Old Lisa, standing at the door, clasped her hands together in astonishment and burst out laughing.

"Then you don't think this rash is anything serious?" said Barbro.

"It will be gone by to-morrow," replied the old woman, still laughing.

Lisa's strange behaviour puzzled Barbro at first, and then it occurred to her that the old woman must have been dreadfully anxious all day. "It would have been better for us all perhaps, if I had done that thing," she said. "I suppose you thought I would when you went away this morning."

"I lay awake in the night," the old woman averred, "wondering what I ought to do, and then something told me that little chap would take care of himself if I left him alone with you."

When they were through with the usual evening tasks and were about to go to bed, old Lisa said to Barbro: "Have you decided yet to let the child live?"

"Yes, if our Lord will only give him health so that I may keep him."

"But what if he should be both blind and an idiot?"

"Well, what of it?" said Barbro, "I couldn't harm the poor little thing in any case. Whatever happens I shall be thankful if I am only allowed to take care of him."

The old woman sat down on the edge of the bed and pondered a bit. Presently she said: "Now that things have taken this happy turn, of course you'll write to Ingmar."

Barbro started. "I thought you wanted the child to live," she said; "but if you send for Ingmar, there's no telling what may happen."

"I don't see what else there is to do. Anyone who hears that you have a baby would be likely to write and tell him."

"I mean to keep this thing a secret until Ingmar has married Gertrude."

Old Lisa saw plainly that Barbro would do something desperate if crossed, and thought it wise not to pursue the subject. "You have been very kind to all the old servants at Ingmar Farm," she said, "and I don't want to lose my good mistress."

"If I have ever been good to you, you can repay me a thousandfold by doing as I wish in this case."

Barbro had her way, and the whole summer passed without anyone finding out about the child. When people came up to the *säter*, the boy was hidden in the hay-shed. Barbro's great concern, however, was how she would manage to conceal him in the autumn, on her return to the village.

Every hour the child grew dearer to her, and with her mother love there came to her some of her old serenity. Though backward in growth and development, little by little the boy gained in strength, but his eyes were still

so inflamed that he could hardly open them. Barbro felt certain in her own mind that he was a congenital idiot. None the less she hoped he might be spared to her. Sometimes she had moments of great depression, mostly during the night, when she would get up and go look at the child as it lay sleeping. It was not a pretty baby; it's nose was too short and its underlip too heavy, and it had a sallow complexion and thin reddish hair. Going back to bed, she would lie awake for hours, grieving at the thought that her son was such a poor little hapless being. But when in the early morning the child awoke after a good night's sleep and lay smiling in its basket, and stretched out its little arms to her when she spoke to it, then Barbro felt calm and reconciled. "I don't believe that mothers with strong healthy children love them as much as I love this poor little weakling," she thought.

One dark stormy evening toward the middle of September Barbro and Lisa sat in the cabin before an open fire. Barbro had the child in her lap and was wondering, as usual, how she should manage to keep the knowledge of its existence from reaching Ingmar. "For if he hears of this," she thought, "he will be sure to come back to me, and I could never make him understand that I want to bear my burden alone."

As she sat thinking thus, the door opened and in came a wayfarer. "Well met in the forest," greeted the man. "It was a lucky thing for me that I found this house, for

I could never have made my way down to the village in this coal black darkness. Happily I remembered that the Ingmar *Säter* was somewhere hereabout."

The man was a poor wretch who had formerly been a peddler, and who now went about the country begging. He was not so reduced as to be compelled to live upon charity; it was simply that he could not give up his old habit of roaming about from place to place to gather news.

Of course the first thing that caught his eye when he entered the cabin was the babe. "Whose child is that?" he asked at once.

For a moment the two women were speechless. Then old Lisa blurted out: "It is Ingmar Ingmarsson's."

The man started in surprise. He seemed a bit disconcerted at having come upon something which he felt they would rather he did not know. To hide his discomfiture he bent over the child, and said: "How old might the little one be?"

"A month." This time it was Barbro who answered.

The man was unmarried and knew little about children, therefore he did not see that the mother was deceiving him. The man stared in astonishment at Barbro, who sat there quite unconcerned. "Only a month, did you say?"

"Yes," Barbro answered calmly.

Then he observed that old Lisa was making signs at her, while Barbro, unheeding, sat with head proudly erect. "The old hag wouldn't stick at a lie," he thought, "but Barbro Svensdotter is above that sort of thing."

The next morning, when he was taking leave, he gave Barbro's hand a significant squeeze. "I'll keep mum," he said. "No one need be the wiser for me"

"Trust you for that!" laughed Barbro.

"What in the world were you thinking about, Barbro?" old Lisa burst forth the moment they were alone. "Why did you tell that lie?"

"There was nothing else for it."

"Do you imagine that Peddler Johannes will keep a thing like that to himself?"

"I don't wish him to."

"Do you want folks to think the boy is not Ingmar's?"

"Yes," said Barbro; "for now that people are bound to hear about it we must let them think what they like."

"And do you expect me to be a party to this?"

"You'll have to, unless you want this poor little idiot to be the next master of Ingmar Farm."

By the middle of September those who had been to the *säters* for the summer returned to their homes, and Barbro and Lisa went back to the farm. They soon found that the whole parish knew about the baby. Nor did Barbro now try to conceal the fact that she had a child. She was only fearful lest people discover that it was not as other children.

Very naturally there was a good deal of talk about Barbro that autumn, and people did not trouble to hide their thoughts of her. In time she became so timid that she would hardly venture outside the house. Even the servants showed a changed attitude toward her, and

made insinuating remarks within her hearing, and she had much difficulty in making them obey her orders.

Strong Ingmar, who had been staying at the farm as overseer in the absence of the master, happened one day to hear a stable boy give Barbro an uncivil answer, and he dealt the fellow a stinging box on the ear that sent him reeling. "If I hear anything like that again," said the old man, "I'll give you a drubbing you won't forget in a hurry!"

"Thank you for that," said Barbro.

Strong Ingmar gave her a look that was anything but friendly. "So long as you are mistress at Ingmar Farm I'll see that the servants show you proper respect," he said gruffly.

Later in the autumn there came word from Jerusalem that Gertrude and Ingmar were on their way to Sweden. When Barbro heard of this her first feeling was one of relief. She had no doubt that Ingmar would now want a full divorce and thought that when once she was free she could throw off the burden of contempt that was crushing her. But afterwards, as she went about her household duties, the tears again and again sprang to her eyes. The thought that all would soon be over between her and Ingmar wrungher heart; for she knew that without him her life would be empty.

HOME FROM THE PILGRIMAGE

HOME FROM THE PILGRIMAGE

ONE morning in the late autumn people kept going in and out of the school-house, for Gertrude had come home the day before. She had arranged upon the large table in Mother Stina's kitchen all the parcels she had brought from Jerusalem, and sent word by the school children to everyone who had relatives or friends among the colonists to come down to the school-house. They all came—Hök Matts, Ljung Björn's brother Pehr and many, many others. As she distributed the gifts, she told them about Jerusalem, about the colony, and the many strange and wonderful experiences they had had there.

Bo Mansson was in the school-house the whole morning helping Gertrude, but Ingmar did not appear. On the journey Ingmar had felt satisfied that what Karin had told him was only a false rumour. But on his arrival, when he heard that it was true, he could not bear the thought of meeting people. He had gone straight to the home of Bo's parents, where he remained in seclusion.

By noontime most of the people had been and gone, and Gertrude for a while happened to be alone in the kitchen. Then a tall, fine-looking woman came in. "Who can she be?" Gertrude wondered. "I thought

I knew everyone in these parts, but I've never seen her before."

The woman went up to Gertrude and offered her hand. "You are Gertrude, I believe," she said in a soft voice. "I wish you would tell me if it is true that you are not going to marry Ingmar."

Gertrude at first resented the stranger's coming thus abruptly and asking such a personal question, and then it struck her that this must be Barbro, Ingmar's wife. "No," she said, "I'm not going to marry Ingmar."

The woman sighed and walked toward the door. "I could not believe this until I had heard it from your own lips," she said.

Barbro thought only of the added difficulties this might bring upon her. Here was Ingmar at home again with no ties and very likely as much in love with her as when he went away. "Now I wouldn't dare let it be known that the child is his," she thought. "I know that he would think himself disgraced in the eyes of everyone, if he allowed me to struggle on alone with a sick child. Of course he would ask me to be his wife again, and as I couldn't say no to him it would only mean a return of the old doubts and fears. But it will be hard for me to go through life bearing a shame I have not merited." As she stood at the door she turned to Gertrude, and said in a low voice: "I suppose Ingmar won't come back to the farm now."

"Perhaps he won't be allowed to come until you are properly divorced."

"I hardly think he'd want to come in any case."

Gertrude rushed up to Barbro. "I believe you are deliberately wronging yourself," she cried. "I have said so all along, and now that I have seen you I'm sure of it."

"How can you say that when you know that I have a child?"

"I think you are treating Ingmar shamefully," pursued Gertrude, "considering how he has been longing for you. His whole life will be ruined unless you tell him the truth."

"I've nothing to tell," Barbro answered.

Gertrude stood looking at the woman as though she were trying to compel her to speak.

"Can you get word to Ingmar?" asked Barbro presently.

"Of course I can."

"Then tell him that Strong Ingmar is dying, and that he must not fail to come home and bid him farewell. He need have no fear of meeting me," she added.

"It would be well for you both if you did meet," said Gertrude.

Barbro turned and opened the door; then glancing back, she said: "It isn't true that Ingmar has become blind, is it?"

"He has lost one eye, but the other eye, which was quite bad for a time, is all right now."

"I am glad I have seen you," said Barbro, with a tender smile. Whereupon she went her way.

An hour or so later Ingmar was on his way to the

farm to take last leave of Strong Ingmar. He walked slowly, as though each step were an effort.

At the roadside was a wretched hovel, and when Ingmar was still at some distance from it he descried a man and a woman standing at the door. The man was poor and shabby, and Ingmar saw the woman put something into his hand and then hasten away in the direction of the Ingmar Farm. As Ingmar was passing the place the man stood counting some silver coin he held in his hand, and he recognized him as Stig Börjesson.

Stig did not see Ingmar until the latter had gone by, when he called: "Wait, Ingmar, wait! Why don't you stop!" he shouted, and ran out into the road. "I want to speak with you." But as Ingmar walked on without even glancing back Stig was provoked. "Very well, suit yourself!" he said. "I had meant to tell you something you'd be glad to know."

A few moments later Ingmar was close upon the heels of the woman he had seen with Stig Börjesson. She was evidently in a great hurry, for she walked very rapidly. Hearing some one behind her and thinking it was Stig she said without turning round: "You must be satisfied with what I have given you; I have no more money to-day." Ingmar said nothing, but quickened his pace. "You shall have some more next week if you will promise not to tell Ingmar anything."

Just then Ingmar came up with her and put his hand on her shoulder. Shaking herself free she turned upon him with an indignant protest. When she saw that it

was Ingmar, and not Stig, she clasped her hands in glad surprise. As their eyes met Ingmar slowly raised his arm and his eyebrows contracted in a deep frown. He looked as if he could have struck her to the earth.

She stood a moment regarding him fearlessly, then quietly drew back. "No, no, Ingmar," she said, "do not make yourself unhappy on my account."

Ingmar let his arm drop. "I ask your pardon," he said coldly. "I couldn't bear seeing you in Stig's company."

Barbro answered in a calm, even voice: "Indeed, I should be thankful to anyone who would rid me of my life."

Without a word, Ingmar crossed to the other side of the road, and walked on in silence. Barbro too continued on her way, silent. The tears sprang to her eyes. "He won't even speak to me," she thought, "and we haven't seen each other in such a long time. To think of our both being so unhappy! I can't bear to have him despise me. Perhaps I'd better tell him the whole truth, and then make away with myself."

So she spoke to him. "You do not ask how Strong Ingmar is?"

"I'll soon be at the house," he returned sullenly, "and can find out for myself."

"He came to me this morning and said that a message had come to him in the night that this would be his last day on earth."

"Is he not ill, then?"

"He has been troubled with rheumatism the whole year, and has fretted a good deal because you did not come home so that he might be released. He has said all along that he couldn't leave until you returned from the pilgrimage."

"And he is no more ill to-day than usual?"

"No; he is no worse than he has been for months past, yet he feels so certain his time has come, that he has actually gone to bed in the little room to await the end. He insists that everything must be just as it was when your father died, and wants us to send for the pastor and the doctor, because they were called in when Big Ingmar was dying. He has also asked for the fine quilt which was spread over Big Ingmar's bed that day, but it was not at the farm. It had been sold at the auction."

"Many things were sold at that auction," Ingmar put in.

"One of the maid-servants told me that Stig Börjesson had bought it; so I thought I would try to get it back, simply to please Strong Ingmar. "I have it here," she said, pointing to a bundle she was carrying.

"You have always been good to the old folk," observed Ingmar. His voice sounded hard and cold, though he meant to speak kindly. After that nothing more was said.

Barbro looked ahead wistfully. "Home seems such a long way off!" she thought. "It will be a half-hour before we are there, and I shall have to walk on seeing all the while how unhappy he is and yet unable to help

him. To tell him the truth would only make matters worse, for in that case his life would again be linked with mine. Never, never have I been put to so crucial a test!"

Though they tried to hasten, the way seemed interminably long. Their heavy thoughts seemed to retard their steps.

When they finally reached the farm and were about to pass in at the gate, Ingmar barred the way.

"I must take this opportunity to tell you of a plan I have in mind, and if you will not agree to it we may perhaps never see each other again. I propose that we withdraw the application for a divorce." There was an uncompromising note in Ingmar's voice and his eyes did not rest upon Barbro, but upon the old homestead. He nodded to the long row of buildings, the low windows and apertures of which seemed to return his salutes with a grave stare.

"Yes, they are eyeing me," he thought. "They want to see if I have at last learned to walk in the ways of God.

"I have thought a good deal about our future to-day," he continued, "and have said to myself, again and again, that a woman like Barbro must not be allowed to ruin her life; that it is my duty to protect her though we can never again live as husband and wife. Now I want to know if you would not like to go back with me to Jerusalem, where we could both join the colony. The colonists are good people, and besides, there are so many of our own folk out there that you would soon feel at home."

"Would you give up the farm for my sake?"

"I want to do what is right, that's all."

"You have already lost the use of one eye in Jerusalem and I know that you were obliged to come home in order to save the other."

"We mustn't think about that now," said Ingmar. "All will be well for us if we only do what is right."

Barbro again felt it would be a mercy to tell him the truth. "No," she bethought herself. "It is best that our ways should part."

As she did not answer, Ingmar said: "This time it will be a long parting, Barbro."

"Yes," she sighed, and gave him her hand. As he held her hand in his a tremor passed through him. For a moment it seemed as though he would draw her to him in a passionate embrace. "I'll go in now and tell Strong Ingmar that you are here," she said.

"Yes, do," said Ingmar, quickly releasing her hand.

Strong Ingmar lay abed in the little room. He suffered no pain, but his heart beat feebly and his breathing was becoming increasingly difficult. "Now I know that my time has come," he mused.

He had his violin by his side, and when there was no one in the room he let his fingers wander over the strings; and then he seemed to hear old dance-tunes and folk-songs he used to play. When the pastor and the doctor came in he pushed the fiddle away, and began to relate wonderful things that had happened to him in days

gone by. They were mostly about Big Ingmar and about the elves and fairies of the woods, who for many years had been his good friends. But from the day Helgum cut down the rosebush outside his hut, the old man said, the world had not been a pleasant place to live in. The elves and fairies had ceased to watch over him and he had been visited by all kinds of infirmities.

"Your Reverence can imagine my joy when Big Ingmar came to me last night and told me I wouldn't have to look after his farm any longer, but could now go to rest."

The old man was very solemn; it was evident that he firmly believed he was dying. The pastor remarked that he did not look very ill, but the doctor, who had examined him, said gravely: "Strong Ingmar knows whereof he speaks. It is not in vain that he awaits his release."

When Barbro came in and spread the beautiful quilt over him, the old man turned quite pale. "The end is nearing," he said, patting Barbro's hand. "Thank you for this, and for all you have done for me. And now you must forgive me for having been so hard upon you of late." Barbro swallowed hard; there was so much pent up anguish in her heart that she could hardly keep back the tears. The old man patted her hand again, and smiled up at her.

"Ingmar will soon be here," she said comfortingly.

At this moment Ingmar entered. The old man with great effort raised himself in bed, and held out his hand to him. "Welcome back to you!" he said.

Ingmar was deeply moved when he saw him. "Never did I think that you would lie down to die on the day of my home-coming!" he said.

"You mustn't reproach me for that," the old man replied. "You surely remember that Big Ingmar said I might come to him as soon as you returned from the pilgrimage."

Ingmar sat down on the edge of the bed, and the sick man stroked his hand, but did not speak for a long while. It was plain that the end was drawing near, for the pallor of death was on his face and his breathing had become heavy and laboured.

When Barbro went out of the room he began to question Ingmar. "Has all gone well with you?" he asked, looking sharply at him.

"I have made a good journey," Ingmar replied.

"I hear that Gertrude has come back with you."

"Yes; she is with her parents now, and she is going to marry my cousin, Bo Mansson."

"Are you pleased at that, Ingmar?"

"I'm thoroughly pleased at that," said Ingmar emphatically.

The old man shook his head. There seemed to be something back of it all which he could not understand. "But what about your eyes?" he asked suddenly.

"I lost the sight of one eye in Jerusalem."

"And are you pleased at that too?"

"You know, Strong Ingmar, that our Lord demands a sacrifice from one to whom He grants a great boon."

"Have you, then, received some special grace?"

"Yes; grace has been given to me to make good a great wrong I did another."

The dying man turned restlessly from side to side.

"Are you in pain?" asked Ingmar.

"No," said the old man, "but I'm troubled."

"What is it that troubles you?"

"You are not lying to me, Ingmar, so that I may pass out in peace?" asked the old man very tenderly.

Ingmar, taken off his guard, fell to sobbing.

"Now tell me the honest truth," said the old man.

Ingmar quickly controlled himself. "Surely I may weep when I'm to lose my good friend."

The old man grew more and more restless, and a cold sweat broke out on his forehead. "You have but just come back, Ingmar," he said presently; "so I don't know if you have had any news from the farm."

"What you are now thinking about I heard in Jerusalem."

"I should have guarded better what was yours."

"Let me tell you, Strong Ingmar, that you wrong Barbro if you think ill of her."

"Am I wronging her?"

"You are," said Ingmar vehemently. "It's well I came home so she has someone to defend her against these scandal mongers."

The old man was about to reply, when Barbro, who had been in the outer room arranging the coffee tray for the visitors and had heard the whole conversation through

the half-open door, came in. She went up to Ingmar as if to speak to him; but instead she bent over the old man and asked him how he felt.

"I feel better now that I have talked with Ingmar," he told her.

"Yes, it is good to talk with him," Barbro whispered. Then she went and sat down by the window.

Strong Ingmar now lay still, with eyes closed and hands folded. The others kept very quiet so as not to disturb him.

The old man's thoughts went back to the time of Big Ingmar's passing. He seemed to see the little room as it was the day he came in to bid Big Ingmar farewell. He remembered how the little children his master had rescued from the flood sat at the foot of the bed when he died.

"You see, Big Ingmar, that you were more blessed than I am," he whispered. For he felt that the friend of his youth was very close. "The pastor and the doctor are both here, and your quilt is spread over me, but there is no little child on my bed."

He had no sooner breathed these words than he heard a voice say: "There is a little child at the farm for which you could perform an act of mercy in your last hour."

Strong Ingmar smiled to himself. He seemed at once to understand what he must do. In a voice which was now very feeble, though still quite audible, he lamented that the pastor and the doctor were obliged to wait so

long for his going. "But as the pastor is here, I want to say that there is an unchristened child in the house which I had thought of asking him to baptize while waiting."

It was quiet in the room before the old man had spoken, but afterwards it was even more so. Presently the pastor said: "It was well you thought of that, Strong Ingmar; the rest of us should have seen to it long ago."

Barbro rose in utter dismay. "No, no!" she protested, "we cannot do that now." She knew that when the child was christened she would have to say who the father was, and on that account had put off the christening. She had planned to have the child baptized when she was really divorced from Ingmar. Now she was almost beside herself with fear.

"You might give me the happiness of doing a good deed in my last hour," said Strong Ingmar, repeating the words he thought he had heard.

"No, I cannot," said Barbro.

Then the doctor advised that it would be well to let the old man have his way. "Strong Ingmar would feel easier if he had something to think of besides his approaching death."

Barbro felt as if held in a vise when they asked her to do this in a room where a man was about to draw his last breath. "Surely you must understand that this is impossible!" she moaned.

The pastor went up to her, and said gravely: "You know of course that your child will have to be baptized."

"Yes," she whispered, "but not to-day. To-morrow I'll bring him to the parsonage. I can't have it done now, when Strong Ingmar is dying."

"Not when you know that it would please him?"

Ingmar Ingmarsson had been sitting all this while silent and motionless. He was deeply affected at seeing Barbro thus humiliated and unhappy. "This is terribly hard for a proud woman like her," he thought. He could not bear that the one whom he had loved and esteemed above all others should be subject to shame and dishonour. "Don't insist upon this," he said to Strong Ingmar. "It is too hard for Barbro."

"We will make it as easy for her as we can," the pastor interposed, "if she will fetch the child. She need only set down on a piece of paper what is necessary for me to know, so that I can enter it in the church books when I get home."

"No, I can't do it!" said Barbro, whose only thought was to have the christening postponed.

Strong Ingmar now raised himself in bed. "It will weigh heavily on your conscience to the end of your days, Ingmar, if you do not see that my last wish is carried out."

Ingmar then went up to Barbro and whispered to her: "I suppose you know that a married woman need not give any name for the child's father but her husband's. Now I will have the child brought in." He looked anxiously at Barbro, who was trembling from head to foot. "I fear she may lose her reason," he thought as he went out.

The few preparations for the service were soon made. The pastor took his robe and prayer-book out of the bag which he carried with him on all occasions, and after a bowl of water had been placed upon the table, old Lisa brought in the child.

As the pastor was adjusting his stole, he said: "Now I must know what name this child is to bear."

"The mother herself will name him of course," said the doctor.

They all turned to Barbro. Her lips moved as if in speech, but no sound came.

"She is thinking of the name her child would bear if all were right," Ingmar mused. "That's why she can't speak." He felt such compassion for her that all resentment passed and the great love he bore his wife conquered every other feeling. "Her child can just as well be called Ingmar," he thought. "Why not? We have to part in any case. It would be a good thing if we could make people think the child was mine; for then Barbro would get back her good name and standing in the community. As it was Strong Ingmar's suggestion that the boy be baptized now," he said aloud, "I think he should be named after him." He looked at Barbro to see whether she had grasped his meaning.

The moment Ingmar had uttered these words Barbro arose and slowly crossed the room until she stood opposite the pastor. Then she said in a steady voice: "Ingmar has been so kind to me that I cannot bear to

cause him further suffering, so now I will confess that the child is his. But Ingmar the boy shall not be called, for he is blind and an idiot."

Instantly she had said this she realized that the secret upon which her life hung had been wrung from her. She burst into tears, and feeling that she could restrain herself no longer, she hurried out of the room so as not to disturb the dying man. She flung herself across the table in the living room and sobbed violently. In a while she raised her head to hear what was going on in the inner room. Someone was talking in subdued tones. It was old Lisa relating what had happened at the *säter*.

Again she bitterly regretted that her secret had been revealed, and again fell to weeping. What could have caused her to speak just when Ingmar had made things so easy for her? she wondered. Why could she not have waited a little longer, until she had got her divorce? "I must put an end to it all," she thought; "I cannot go on living."

The pastor was now reading the Baptismal Service. He spoke distinctly and she could hear every word. When he came to the place where the child should be named, he raised his voice and said: "I name this child Ingmar." Hearing which Barbro in her helplessness again fell to weeping.

Shortly afterward, the door opened and Ingmar came out. Barbro quickly choked back her tears. "You understand, of course, that everything between us must be as we arranged before you went away," she said.

Ingmar gently stroked her hair. "I shall not force you to do anything. After what you have just done I know that you love me more than your own life."

She seized his hand and pressed it hard. "Will you promise to let me have the entire care of the child?"

"Yes," said Ingmar. "Everything shall be as you wish. Old Lisa has told us how you have fought for that child, and no one could have the heart to take it away from you."

She looked at him in astonishment. She could hardly grasp the fact that her fears and apprehensions had suddenly been swept away. "I thought you would never forgive me once you knew the truth," she told him. "I am more grateful than I can say. I'm glad we part as friends and can speak to each other without ill-feeling when we chance to meet."

Ingmar smiled. "I wonder if you wouldn't like to go with me to Jerusalem now, Barbro?" he said.

Barbro had never seen him like that before. His face was transformed; his heavy features were as if illumined by an inner light that made him look almost handsome. "What does this mean, Ingmar? Have you some plan in mind? I heard that you called the boy Ingmar. Why did you do that?"

"Now you shall hear something wonderful, Barbro," he said, taking hold of both her hands. "As soon as old Lisa had told us all that happened up at the *säter*, I had the doctor examine the child; he declares there is nothing the matter with it. He says that it is rather

small for its age but quite sound and healthy, and as bright as any baby."

"But doesn't the doctor think it looks queer and ugly?" asked Barbro breathlessly.

"The children in our family are no better looking as a rule, I'm afraid," said Ingmar.

"And doesn't he think the boy blind, either?"

"The doctor will probably laugh at you, Barbro, as long as he lives for imagining such a thing. He says that to-morrow he will send you a lotion with which you are to bathe the boy's eyes. In less than a week he assures me they'll be all right."

Barbro hastened toward the little room. Ingmar called her back. "You can't have the child just now," he said. "Strong Ingmar has asked us to let it rest on his bed, so that he can have everything just as father had it. I know that he would like to keep the boy with him until the end."

"I'm not going to take him away from Strong Ingmar," said Barbro. "But I must talk with the doctor myself."

When she came back she crossed over to the window, going past Ingmar. "I have questioned the doctor," she said, "and am satisfied that it is so." She lifted her arms toward heaven as a bird set free lifts its wings for a skyward flight. "Ingmar, you don't know what happiness is!"

"Barbro, may I talk to you now of our future?" Ingmar pleaded. But she did not hear him. She had folded

her hands, and stood pouring out her soul in thanks to God. She confided to Him all the anguish and fear she had felt for the fate of her child, and thanked Him that her little one was as other children; that she would see him romp and play; that he would one day go to school, and learn to read and write; that he would grow up to be a strong youth, able to wield an axe and drive a plow, and might some day bring home a wife and live at the Ingmar Farm as its master.

Then she turned to Ingmar, her face radiant with joy. "I know now why my father used to say that the Ingmarssons were the best people in the whole parish."

"Perhaps our Lord has been more indulgent with us than with others," Ingmar said humbly. "But now I must talk to you——"

"No," Barbro interrupted, "it is because you are never satisfied until you have found favour with our Lord. It is for your sake the curse has been removed. Because you made that pilgrimage everything has come right. All that enabled me to bear up last winter was the hope that God might be merciful to me because you had gone on that mission to Jerusalem."

Ingmar bowed his head. "I know that all my life I've been the weakest of mortals," he answered, with great humility.

"Do you know what was said in there a while ago? The pastor declared that hereafter people would call you *Big* Ingmar, because you stand so well in the sight of our Lord."

They were now seated on the old corner sofa. Barbro had nestled close to Ingmar; but his arm hung straight down and his face grew darker and darker.

"I'm afraid that you are angry with me," said Barbro. "You are thinking of how I treated you when we met in the road. But I want you to know that that was the hardest moment of my life."

"How can I be happy when I don't know how I stand with you?" said Ingmar. "You say so many nice things to me, but you haven't told me that you will remain with me as my wife."

"Haven't I?" asked Barbro, smiling. Suddenly her fear came back, and she shuddered. Then, looking around her, she saw the old room with its broad low window, the old seats along the wall, and the hearth where generation after generation had sat working in the light of the peat fire. This gave her a feeling of security, she felt that here was a haven of safety and protection. "I could never live anywhere but in your home," she said.

The pastor came to the door and beckoned to them. "Strong Ingmar now sees heaven open," he said softly.

THE END

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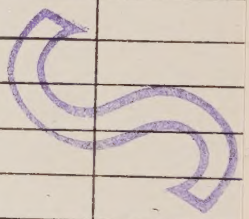

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